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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)
APO U.S. Forces 96250

149 206-65
MHC J34

23 FEB 1966

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SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)

THRU: Commanding General
1st Infantry Division
APO U.S. Forces 96345

TO: Commander
U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
ATTN: J34
APO U.S. Forces 96243

In accordance with MACV Directive Number 335-8, the following report is submitted.

173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE) OPERATION "CRIMP"

1. GENERAL: On 8 January 1966 the 173d Abn Bde (Sop) terminated a successful Operation "MARAUDER" along the Oriental River in Mau Nghia Province and moved directly into the largest U.S. operation thus far conducted in Vietnam. "CRIMP", as the operation was named, was a massive attack by air and land to strike at the very heart of the Viet Cong machine in Southern RVN. The notorious "HOBO WOODS" Region in Binh Duong Province, just West of the fabled "IRON TRIANGLE" was believed to hold the Politico-Military headquarters of the Viet Cong Military Region 4. The objective of Operation "CRIMP" was to find and destroy or capture all personnel, equipment, and intelligence material of this headquarters (See Inclosure 1, Operations Overlay).

The 173d Abn Bde (Sop) and 3rd Bde, 1st Inf Div, with numerous artillery and other supporting elements were jointly employed in the Area of Operations (AO) to accomplish the mission. The operation was directed by MACV and the 1st Inf Div was the controlling headquarters. Brig. Gen. Ellis W. Williamson is the reporting officer for this report. The Task Organization and Task Force Commanders for the operation were as follows:

- a. Task Force 1/503d - Lt. Col. Tyler
1st Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry
One (1) RRU Team
One (1) FAC Team
One (1) Engineer Squad
- b. Task Force 2/503d - Lt. Col. Dexter
2nd Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry
One (1) RRU Team
One (1) FAC Team
One (1) Engineer Squad
- c. Task Force 1/KAR - Lt. Col. Preece
1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment
One (1) RRU Team
One (1) FAC Team

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- d. Task Force 3/319 - Lt. Col. Surut
3d Battalion (Airborne), 319th Artillery
105 Field Battery, RAA
161st Artillery Battery, (RNZA)
"A" Battery, 8/6 Artillery (155mm)
- e. Task Force Support - Capt Dunlop
D Company, 16th Armor
Prince of Wales Light Horse Troop (PWLH) (-)
173d Engineer Company (-)
Australian Engineer Troop (-)
173d Headquarters and Headquarters Company (-) with LAVN
Liaison Team
Forward Logistical Operations Center (LOC) with Combat
Trains of Assault Battalions
- f. Task Force E/17 - Capt Moore
Troop E, 17th Cavalry
APC element (PWLH)
One (1) Engineer Squad
Artillery Advance Party
- g. Task Force Rear - Lt. Col. Staigers
173d Support Battalion
173d Admin Company
Rear Detachments of all assigned and attached units

2. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS:

a. At 061800H January 1966 the 173d Abn Dde (Sep) OPOED 1-66 was published outlining plans for the conduct of Operation "CRIMP". Although the operation was controlled by the 1st Inf Div, which employed its 3rd Brigade to the South of the 173d Dde AO, actions to be conducted within the 173d AO were left to the discretion of Brig. Gen. Williamson. Coordination was effected prior to the beginning of the operation for all areas of interest. Daily liaison was accomplished during the operation to assure continued close coordination.

To best accomplish the mission of driving into the HOCB Woods region to destroy the headquarters of Military Region 4, the operation was conducted in six (6) phases as follows:

(1) Phase I - Fire support Base moved by motor convoy to Position KING, vicinity XT 6123, occupied positions and conducted artillery registrations.

(2) Phase II - The three (3) assault battalions staging from DAO TRAI (XT 5405) conducted airmobile assaults in rapid succession into LZ MARCH (XT 646283), LZ APRIL (XT 614261) and LZ MAY (XT 624288) in that order. Order of units to enter the AO was 1/RAR, 1/503d Inf, and 2/503d Inf. All landing zones were prepared by TAC Air, artillery and armed helicopters.

(3) Phase III - Upon completion of the airmobile assaults, 1/RAR moved to establish blocking positions to the Northeast while 1/503d Inf attacked to the East and 2/503d Inf attacked to the Southeast toward the suspected VC headquarters.

(4) Phase IV - 1/503d Inf and 2/503d Inf continued to attack to the East to kill or capture VC personnel and equipment. 1/RAR held in blocking positions to the Northeast to prevent escape of VC from AN NEON TAY village (XT 6628) North along the road.

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(5) Phase V - All three assault battalions attacked to the East to the Saigon River. NOTE: During this phase of the operation 1/503d with D/16th Armor attached was moved to the Northwest portion of the AO and the battalion boundaries within the Bde AO were changed (see Inclosure 2, New Boundaries).

(6) Phase VI - Redeployment to Bien Hoa Base Camp on order.

b. During the operation Army Air Support was provided by eleven (11) separate units and tactical air support was provided by 2d Air Division (USAF) (See paragraph 5, Supporting Forces).

c. 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division retained responsibility of the Bien Hoa Air Base which was assumed at the beginning of Operation "MARAUDER I" and maintained one Infantry Battalion on six (6) hour alert throughout the operation.

d. Prior to D-Day permission was requested and received from 1st Inf Div for the use of tear gas on Operation "CRIMP".

3. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Enemy Situation Prior to Operation: The AO for operation "CRIMP" was believed to house the headquarters complex for the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh Special Sector Committee. This committee was responsible for all Viet Cong activities within the Capital Military Region (MR-4). Intelligence reports indicated that the committee was conducting meetings in bunkers vicinity XT 630270. The complex was reported to be guarded by a Local Force Company, with an additional one or two Main Force Battalions in the vicinity as an added security measure. Two Main Force units, Q763 Regiment and 2nd Battalion of Q762 Regiment were reported to have been located near the proposed Brigade AO.

b. Enemy Situation During Operation: The SCGSS headquarters was not located precisely where intelligence had indicated; however, the complex was discovered to be located to the east in the populated area. The Brigade uncovered and destroyed the majority of the headquarters complex of the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh Special Sector Committee. The complex was housed in an intricate, well constructed series of tunnels extending from the vicinity XT 6527, Northwest to vic XT 6330. The VC forces engaged ranged from individual snipers to forces of company size, fighting from well constructed camouflaged fighting positions built as extensions to the tunnel systems. The VC company sized force was confirmed to be the C306th Local Force Company. Many smaller sized security elements were contacted throughout the AO. The apparent mission of these units was to delay the Brigade and provide time for evacuation of equipment, documents, and whatever Committee personnel were present in the area. Information received from VCC revealed that the operation was conducted just prior to the committee's scheduled monthly meeting. It can be assumed that the operation achieved tactical surprise from the quantity of weapons and documents captured. Some of the significant document finds included; the VC ceasefire strategy for the forthcoming "TET" holiday, plans and maps of U.S. installations in Saigon-Cholon area to be used as possible targets, rosters of various sections, lists of Communist Party members, etc. A total of 7,500 documents were located within this headquarters complex..

c. Fortifications: The fortification system within the AO was the most extensive and intricate one the Brigade has encountered. It included mutually supporting trenches, and bunkers, and a maze of multi-level tunnels, some of which were constructed of steel and concrete. These tunnels were protected by command detonated claymore type mines

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and the approaches and entrances were heavily booby-trapped. Many of the trench systems were capable of accommodating a VC battalion. The tunnels had been constructed over an extended period of time and were not vulnerable to artillery and air strikes--except for direct hits. They were of such great lengths and contained so many entrances that complete destruction would require large numbers of troops at least one month using great amounts of riot control agents and demolitions.

Terrain analysis: The terrain within the Brigade AO was flat with the exception of the eastern portion where the ground drops off to the Saigon River. This eastern portion of the AO includes one hill mass (XT 6527) which dominates the surrounding area. The southern half of the AO is covered primarily with jungle, while the northern half is mostly rundown rubber plantation. The eastern strip of the AO bordering the Saigon River is continuous paddy land. The area immediately west of this strip of paddy land is composed of populated area, dense wooded sections, and family plots bordered by dense tree lines.

Final Analysis: The operation confirmed the fact that the area as previously reports stated housed the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Linh Special Sector Headquarters. The numerous SPAN and MED HAZE reports indicated heavy VC concentrations north and northwest of the Brigade TAOR. Small VC security elements continued to snipe at friendly personnel and aircraft during the entire operation, indicating that the local populace is thoroughly indoctrinated and extremely dedicated to the VC cause.

4. EXECUTION:

a. D-Day (8 January 1966) - Operation "CRIMP" commenced at 080530H January 1966 when Task Force E/17 began clearing the route for the Brigade motor convoy to the HUCO Woods Region (See Inclosure 3, Strip Map). At 071730H E/17 had displaced to vicinity XT 603107 in preparation for the early morning move of 8 January. Two (2) companies of the ARVN 38th Ranger Battalion were used to secure the route of march from Bao Trai (XT 5405) to the new E/17 position. At 080600H the main body of the Brigade convoy (TF 3/319 and TF Support) departed Bao Trai. The convoy moved to the new Brigade Base vicinity XT 611235, closing at 081015H with no contact. The entire move was covered closely by airborne FAC's, TAC air cap and armed helicopters. Advance coordination had been effected with 1st Inf Div, to allow the 173d Abn Bde, 3rd Bde, and 1st Div fire support units to utilize the same road network into the Operational Area. Additionally the road movement was timed to permit units to move to the forward troop safety limit as B-52 Bombers conducted a massive prestrike in the area of operations. Immediately upon arrival in the new Brigade Base the artillery units conducted registrations and prepared to support the assault battalions.

Commencing at 080930H, after a forty-five minute preparation by TAC Air, artillery and armed helicopters, TF 1/RAR conducted a heliborne assault into LZ MARCH. The assault helicopters received small arms fire during the landing and 1/RAR encountered light enemy resistance to the East and West of the LZ. By 081005H all 1/RAR troops were on the ground, the LZ was secured and 1/RAR moved to occupy blocking positions and await the landing of 1/503d Inf and 2/503d Inf. Following preparations by TAC Air, artillery and armed helicopters, 1/503d Inf made its heliborne assault on LZ APRIL at 081200H, followed by 2/503d Inf on LZ MAY at 081430H. No contact was made on the LZ's however ground fire was received by the helicopters on each assault.

At 081030H 1/RAR received small arms fire from the Northeast and South of their LZ. The fire was returned and movement into blocking positions continued. At 081030H six (6) VC suspects and one machine gun were captured in a hut vicinity XT 649284. An extensive

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tunnel system in the same area was searched and thirty (30) women and children were discovered and were evacuated from the battle area. About the same time vicinity XT 650281, a dug in casualty clearing station was discovered which was guarded by a VC squad. During a short fire fight five (5) VC were killed. At 081220H heavy contact was made with a VC company via XT 655285 which employed small arms, booby traps, command detonated mines, 57mm Recoilless Rifles and mortars. During the action, which lasted until darkness, 1/RAR overran successive VC positions with bunkers and trenches in depth. The VC fought a tenacious battle, obviously in defense of something of great value to them. During the battle seven (7) VC were confirmed killed and two (2) rifles and one (1) B&I were captured. At 081445H a cache of weapons parts, 5000 rounds small arms ammunition, several B&I and mortar rounds, thirty-five (35) grenades, and numerous rifle magazines and ammunition pouches was discovered vicinity XT 650285. At 081625H seventy (70) VC suspects were captured vicinity XT 649286 and moved out of the battle area. As darkness fell 1/RAR was searching the bunkers and tunnels for additional VC personnel and equipment. Immediately after completion of heliborne assaults 1/503d Inf and 2/503d Inf attacked to surround and occupy the objective area, which was the reported location of the headquarters of Military Region 4. However, there were no high level VC committee personnel encountered nor was there any evidence of an established installation in the area. During the attack by 1/503d and 2/503d numerous VC suspects and over 400 refugees were encountered. It should be noted that the civilians found in the area appeared to be thoroughly indoctrinated and sympathetic to the VC movement. At 081440H 1/503d discovered two trails vicinity XT 618263 and XT 618265, each of which appeared to have been used by 60 - 70 bicycles in the past four (4) hours. At 081625H 1/503d located a platoon position with freshly dug trenches and bunkers and a house containing 1000 pounds of rice vicinity XT 630272. The area appeared to have been used as an aid station. One (1) stretcher and a small amount of medicine was captured. At 081625H another trail was discovered vicinity XT 639269 leading South with numerous fresh bicycle tracks. By the end of the day it was obvious that the target was not in the anticipated area and appeared likely that it was located to the North, within the 1/RAR AO.

During the day elements of E/17th Cavalry, D/16th Armor and PWLB conducted clearing operations around the Bde Base Position. At 081155H five (5) VC were engaged vicinity XT 609228 and one (1) was killed, carrying a document case and three (3) documents. At 081335H E/17 located a cache vicinity XT 621229 containing 5000 pounds of rice, 60 pounds of salt and 60 pounds of fertilizer. At 081400H D/16 discovered two (2) hand grenades, miscellaneous medical supplies and several documents in a foxhole vicinity XT 617245. Contact was made with a small VC force vicinity XT 605245 at 081450H. During a short fire fight E/17 killed two (2) VC.

In the Bde Base during the day several caches and entrenched areas were located. At 081205H C/3/319 discovered a tunnel vicinity XT 612241 containing 1800 pounds of rice, 100 pounds of salt, several documents and numerous empty 30 caliber and 20mm shell casings. A bunker and trench system was located vicinity XT 616241 with automatic weapons positions. At 081555H, C Battery discovered 3000 pounds of rice via XT 610244. Approximately one dozen (12) helicopters received hits from ground fire on D-Day from areas in the Bde AO without loss of aircraft or injury to personnel. Artillery and Tac Air was placed on all suspected VC locations. On one occasion an officer observed two smoke trails from the ground to the vicinity of a helicopter, indicating that the VC in this area probably employ some type of portable ground to air missile as was encountered on Operation "MAHAUDEN I".

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During the day a system was established by Bde G-5 personnel to evacuate as much rice as possible from the AO to be given to local officials for distribution to needy families.

At the end of the D-Day all VC elements had broken contact and CP locations were as follows:

Brigade CP - XT 611235
1/503d Inf - XT 637271
2/503d Inf - XT 628288
1/RAR - XT 648286
3/319 Arty - XT 612241

There was no contact during the night of 8-9 January.

b. D-1 (9 January 1966) - 173d Abn Bde (Sep) continued Operation "CRIMP" in the HODO Woods Region with two battalions attacking to the East toward the Saigon River while the third battalion remained in blocking positions to the Northeast.

1/503d Inf and 2/503d Inf continued the attack to the East, thoroughly searching the area of operations. During the day only minor contact was made as numerous fortified positions and caches continued to be located. At 090900H 2/503d discovered two caches; one vicinity XT 633272 containing 400 pounds of fertilizer and 100 pounds of rice and the second vicinity XT 633279 containing 2000 pounds of rice. At 090920H 1/503d discovered two trench systems, each of which was large enough to accommodate a battalion size force vicinity XT 638261 and XT 639265. At 091120H 2/503d Inf received small arms fire from a small VC force vicinity XT 657275. The area was hit with artillery fires and searched by 2/503d Inf with no further contact. At 091440H 2/503d Inf discovered two huts containing approximately 2500 pounds of rice with a concrete bunker nearby, vicinity XT 654264. A cache containing approximately 9000 pounds of rice was located vicinity XT 656264 at 091530H. During the day it became apparent that there had been no recent large scale VC activities in the 1/503d Inf AO and very little in the 2/503d Inf AO.

1/RAR continued to occupy blocking positions to the Northeast of 1/503d Inf and 2/503d Inf and conducted numerous patrols in sector to search for VC personnel and equipment. Intricate multi-level tunnel systems were discovered during the day containing several large weapon caches and numerous documents which proved beyond doubt that 1/RAR was sitting on top of the VC Political Headquarters of Military Region 4. Included in the find were detailed maps of all friendly military installations in the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh area, friendly UB of allied forces by name and extensive rosters of U.S. Personnel living in the Saigon area. The documents indicated that the entire headquarters of the Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh Special Zone was located within the Bde AO. Only two minor contacts were made by the 1/RAR during the day with one (1) VC being killed and another captured vicinity XT 652288 at 091700H. Five weapons and equipment caches were captured during the day vicinity XT 649282, XT 651287, XT 654286, XT 652288 and XT 641293 containing forty-seven (47) weapons, many weapons components, and over twenty thousand rounds of small arms and crew served weapons ammunition. The captured weapons included one (1) 57mm Recoiless rifle, four (4) 12.7mm Anti-aircraft machine guns, two machine guns and numerous individual rifles, carbines and sub-machine guns.

At first light on D-1 E/17 Cav with one (1) platoon of APC's from FWH moved out of the Bde Base to conduct search and clear operations to the North. At 090710H vicinity XT 608243, E/17 made contact with a VC squad which was apparently planning to mortar the Bde's Artillery Positions. The VC fired four (4) 60mm mortar rounds and small arms fire before breaking contact under an aggressive attack by E/17. The area was hit by TAC air and searched by E/17 with no further contact. At 091250H E/17 discovered a cache containing 1000 pounds of rice vicinity XT 624258.

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173d Engineer Company conducted one (1) squad sized clearing patrol during the morning to the East of the Bde Base. Caches containing 1000 pounds of rice and 2000 pounds of rice respectively were located vicinity XT 614226 and XT 615225 at 090800H. At 091045H three (3) punji pits and a trench system running approximately 700 meters to the Northwest was discovered vicinity XT 617237.

D/16th Armor departed the Bde Base at 090800H and moved to the 2/503d Inf AO and was attached on arrival. D/16 assisted in search operations in the 2/503d Inf AO during the day and remained vicinity the 2/503d Inf base during the night.

Bde helicopters continued to receive ground fire throughout the AO during the day. Counter fires were placed on suspected VC locations in all cases. During the day a total of four hundred and ninety (490) Vietnamese were evacuated from the battle area by helicopter. Of these thirty-six (36) were confirmed as VC and 167 were held as VC suspects. The remainder were evacuated from the battle area for their safety.

At the end of D+1 CP locations were as follows:

1/503d Inf - XT 649265
2/503d Inf - XT 655275
D/16 Armor - Same as 2/503d Inf
All Others - No change

During the night of 9-10 January VC contact was reported in all areas of the Bde sector. Attempts were made throughout the night by VC squad size forces to probe the 1/RAR perimeter. At 091920H 1/RAR killed two (2) VC and captured one weapon vicinity XT 647288. From 100505H to 100615H 1/RAR received sporadic mortar fire with no casualties. Artillery fires were placed on all suspected VC locations. 1/503d Inf and 2/503d Inf each received sporadic mortar and sniper fire throughout the night with no casualties. In the Bde Base position at 100220H, B/3/319th and E/17th Cav received mortar fire and small arms fire from the Northwest. Counter fires were placed on the suspected VC positions and no further fire was received.

c. D+2 (10 January 1966) - The 173d Abn Bde (Sep) continued Operation "CRIMP", conducting numerous search patrols in sector to locate VC forces, installations and equipment, and repositioned one battalion task force to the Northern portion of the Bde AO (see Inclosure 2). During the day permission was granted for use of CS-1 Agent to contaminate tunnels and bunkers which could not be destroyed.

Commencing at 100730H 1/503d Inf conducted ten (10) platoon sized search and destroy patrols South, Southwest and West of the Bn Base. No VC contact was made during the morning and the area appeared to have had no recent large scale VC activity. The patrols closed back into the Bn base by 101330H, and 1/503d Inf began preparations to move to a new AO. D/16th Armor was detached from 2/503d Inf and attached to 1/503d Inf effective 101200H. At 101500H 1/503d Inf moved by APC and foot march to an attack position vicinity XT 631281. At 101700H the lead element of 1/503d Inf engaged a VC company vicinity XT 631284. After a short fire fight the VC broke contact leaving twenty-nine (29) dead behind. Air and Artillery were used during the contact and again after the VC broke contact. The area was then searched with no further contact. 1/503d Inf closed into its attack position at 101800H and began preparations to attack to the North on 11 January.

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2/503d Inf conducted ten (10) squad sized search patrols in sector during the day. Numerous documents and small rice caches were located but no recently inhabited VC installations were found. The only contact of the day occurred at 100855H when sniper fire was received vicinity XT 658277.

During the day nearly 200 VC suspects and refugees were captured in the populated areas along the road vicinity XT 6526 and were evacuated.

1/RAR continued to occupy blocking positions Northeast of LZ MARCH and conducted platoon sized search patrols in sector. During the morning, patrols discovered five (5) VC bodies, three weapons and numerous blood trails in the areas of VC initiated actions during the night of 9-10 January. At 101235H three (3) VC were engaged vicinity XT 654278. One (1) VC was killed and one (1) automatic weapon and four (4) grenades were captured. At 101200H a D Company patrol killed one (1) VC vicinity XT 657280 and at 101340H a C Company patrol killed one (1) VC vicinity XT 607287. Throughout the day patrols continued to discover additional extensive tunnel and bunker systems in sector. One tunnel was discovered which contained a well to supply water below ground. Personnel searching the tunnels carried a TA-312 telephone and a roll of communications wire to allow for reporting of finds in the tunnel and to measure depth or length of the tunnel. Dog teams were also used to search the tunnels. Brigade Chemical personnel successfully employed "MIGHTY MITE" (a small back-pack air compressor which can be used to blow smoke or tear gas into the tunnels) in the tunnel systems in the 1/RAR sector. At 101020H fifty (50) VC suspects were captured in one of the tunnels with no casualties.

At 100900H E/17 Cavalry moved out of the Bde base with one platoon of APC's from PWLH to search the area bounded by grid lines XT 59.5 on the West, XT 61 on the East, 23 on the South and 25.5 on the North. Continuous contact was maintained throughout the day as the task force fought a running battle with snipers and small VC forces. At 101410H a VC force was encountered vicinity XT 599255 occupying trenches. Two air strikes and massive artillery fires were placed on the location followed by a sweep by E/17 and the APC's. Sixteen (16) VC bodies were found and it is estimated that at least sixty (60) more were killed. On several occasions the E/17 commander and the artillery FO in a helicopter above observed bombs and artillery rounds land in the midst of groups of VC.

On D+2 Bde helicopters continued to receive ground fire from the AO. However a marked decrease was observed. At the end of D+2 CP locations were as follows: TF 1/503d Inf - XT 631281
All Others - No Change

d. D+3 (11 January 1966) 173d Abn Bde (Sep) continued Operation "GRIMP" with one battalion attacking to the North and two battalions searching in sector. Bde units continued to discover elaborate multi-level tunnel and bunker systems throughout the AO. Special demolition teams were utilized to destroy the systems and tunnels were contaminated by a persistent riot control agent where destruction was not possible.

At 110800H, TF 1/503d Inf jumped off in an attack to the North to seize and destroy the fortified area reported vicinity XT 6330. Massive air and artillery strikes preceded the infantry on the objective area. C Company and D/16th Armor maneuvered around the West flank to blocking positions vicinity XT 630304 while A and B Companies attacked to the North. At 110830H contact was made with five (5) VC vicinity XT 639299 with two VC being captured. At 110920H as C Company moved into blocking positions, a VC squad was engaged which employed small arms and command detonated mines. At 111045H a platoon sized VC force was contacted via XT 634298 in a well prepared trench system. All 1/503d elements continued to press forward behind a wall of artillery and TAC air fires. By 111100H

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all units were in contact with an estimated VC company which fought persistently from a well developed trench, bunker and tunnel system. The entire area was heavily booby trapped and mined, including command detonated claymore type mines. By 111230H 1/503d Inf had completely over run the VC positions. During the battle, Bde Chemical personnel employed flame throwers against the VC bunkers and trenches. This was the first time Bde elements had utilized the flame thrower against VC forces. During the afternoon 1/503d Inf conducted a systematic search of the complex tunnel and bunker system. Seven (7) VC bodies were located and equipment and blood trails indicated that at least thirty (30) others were killed. Twelve (12) weapons and numerous documents were captured.

1/RAR continued to search in sector utilizing numerous small patrols. At 110900H one (1) VC was killed vicinity XT 645286. At 111030H sniper fire was received vicinity XT 648278. 1/RAR swept through the position but no further contact was made. A cache containing fifteen (15) tons of rice was discovered in the area. At 111110H two concrete trap doors were discovered vicinity XT 654286 which opened into another intricate tunnel system. Throughout the day 1/RAR continued to find documents and equipment which verified that they were in the SCGDSZ headquarters. Three typewriters, two tape recorders and a duplicating machine were found in a hidden chamber of one tunnel system.

2/503d Inf continued to sweep toward the Southwest edge of the Bde AO. Numerous tunnels continued to be discovered, searched and then destroyed or contaminated. At 110855H a VC squad was engaged vicinity XT 658277. Two VC were killed and one (1) M-1 Rifle and one Chicom Submachine Gun were captured. At 111310H a weapons cache was discovered in a tunnel vicinity XT 656271 which contained six (6) Chicom Carbines, three (3) Model 98 Mauser Rifles, 25 pounds of documents and 100 rounds of small arms ammunition.

E/17th Cavalry with seven (7) APC's from FWLH attached conducted search and clear operations in the Western portion of the Bde AO as far North as XT 605295. At 110815H a trench system was located via XT 615269 containing four (4) hand grenades. At 111245H a cache containing nine (9) tons of rice was discovered vicinity XT 592265. The TF closed back into the Bde Base prior to darkness with no contact.

During the day Bde units utilized "Cry Baby" and "Mighty Mite" to flush VC and Vietnamese refugees from the many tunnel systems in the Bde AO. At 111235H fifty-eight (58) personnel were captured from one system vicinity XT 642299 by 1/503d Inf. The Australian Engineer Troop worked in the 1/RAR sector and Bde Chemical personnel worked in 1/503d Inf and 2/503d Inf sector. A total of over 600 VC, VC suspects and refugees were evacuated from the AO on D+3.

At the end of the day CP locations were as follows:

TF 1/503d Inf - XT 641298
All Others - No Change

At 112000H 4/8/6 Artillery received sniper fire from vicinity XT 606237. The fire was returned, and upon investigation of the area a blood stained pistol belt and seven (7) grenades were found.

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e. D+4 (12 January 1966) - Operation "CRIMP" continued in the HOBO Woods Region with Bde elements searching and destroying or contaminating tunnel and bunker systems in sector and contacting VC forces up to squad size.

1/503d Inf conducted platoon sized search patrols in areas surrounding the Bn base and encountered sporadic sniping and mortar fire throughout the day. The entire area was heavily booby trapped with 105mm rounds hanging from trees which were command detonated. At 121130H a trench system 800 meters long with two command bunkers was discovered and at 121145H one (1) U.S. 1903 Rifle and three (3) Chicom Carbines were located vicinity XT 635305. At 121335H ten (10) hand grenades and one (1) satchel charge were discovered vicinity XT 640300. Later at 121355H three (3) VC were killed and 80 Chicom hand grenades, 70 rifle grenades, one (1) typewriter and six (6) bicycles were captured vicinity XT 638305. At the same time one (1) Chicom Carbine and one (1) pack were discovered in a tunnel vicinity XT 639302. At 121700H three (3) Chicom M44 Carbines were captured in a tunnel vicinity XT 632305.

2/503d Inf continued to search in sector with no VC contact during the day. At 121145H a cache containing two (2) bags of documents and numerous medical supplies was discovered vicinity XT 657275. Another cache was located vicinity XT 653273 at 121315H containing one (1) Mosin Nagant Rifle, numerous documents and miscellaneous medical supplies. During the day B Company moved a herd of cattle from the operational area to vicinity XT 611235 where they were turned over to ARVN representatives to be returned to refugees from the operational area. At 121220H ten (10) VC were engaged in a trench vicinity XT 648248. The VC were hit by armed helicopters followed by a sweep by B Company. Three (3) VC were killed and the rest withdrew. The cattle drive then continued. After completion of the drive B Company returned to the Bde base position for the night.

1/RAR continued to search the multi-level tunnel systems in their AO, seizing VC supplies and equipment. Sporadic sniper and mortar fire was received during the day. At 120930H one (1) Russian Model 1891/30 sniper rifle with scope was discovered vicinity XT 636258. At approximately the same time one (1) Chicom M-44 Carbine was captured vicinity XT 6528. At 121430H eight (8) VC were killed in a tunnel vicinity XT 6528.

E/17th Cav conducted a mounted reconnaissance in the Western portion of the Bde AO. Three (3) rice caches were discovered vicinity XT 604235, XT 604233, XT 602223 containing over 6,000 pounds of rice. No contact was made by E/17 during the day.

On D+4 over 300 VC suspects and refugees were evacuated from the AO. Bde helicopters continued to receive ground fire, although the occurrence has been greatly reduced since D- Day. All suspected VC locations continued to be hit by artillery and T&C Air.

CP locations did not change on D+4. Several contacts were reported by Bde units during the night. At 122155H 1/503d Inf reported a secondary explosion resulted from H&I fires vicinity XT 636303. A 1/503d Inf outpost killed one (1) VC vicinity XT 641299 at 122155H.

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f. D+5 (13 January 1966) - 173d Abn Bde (Sep) continued Operation "CRIMP", completing destruction of previously discovered trenches, bunkers, and tunnel systems and contaminating tunnels with a persistent riot control agent when destruction was not practicable.

1/503d Inf conducted four (4) platoon sized search and destroy patrols in sector and continued to search, destroy and contaminate tunnels previously discovered. During the morning a cache was discovered vicinity XT 644294 containing $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons of rice. At 131215H a new bunker and tunnel system was discovered vic XT 614300 which contained tunnels on six (6) separate levels. The Bde special demolition team was employed to destroy the complex. At 131510H C/1/503d engaged a VC platoon vicinity XT 639294 which employed automatic weapons and mortars. Artillery fires were immediately brought to bear on the VC position. The airborne FAC observed the VC mortar firing and placed an air strike on the position, using napalm and bombs. All ordnance was on target, with an estimated 20 VC killed. After supporting fires had moved across the VC positions, C/1/503d swept through with no further contact. Ten (10) VC bodies were left by the retreating platoon.

At 131300H D/16th Armor was detached from 1/503d Inf and moved back to the Bde base position. In route a cache containing 1000 pounds of rice was discovered vicinity XT 615272.

2/503d Inf continued to search and destroy tunnel systems in sector using platoon size patrols. At 130730H One (1) VC surrendered to 2/503d Inf vicinity XT 647275. One (1) VC body was discovered vicinity the river XT 659227. Clothing had been stripped from the body. Another body was discovered at XT 660270. This VC appeared to have been killed by mortar or artillery fires several days earlier. At 131310H a patrol killed one (1) VC vicinity XT 665262 wearing black pajamas and a pith helmet. Commencing at 130830H B/2/503d Inf was extracted from the Bde base by helicopter and moved to the Bde Base at Bien Hoa where they remained in an alert status until the Bde closed in on 14 January 1966.

1/RAR continued destruction of located VC tunnel systems and conducted platoon sized search patrols in sector. At 130500H one VC wearing black pajamas was killed by an ambush vicinity XT 652289. At 131030H two VC were captured vicinity XT 655235.

During the day E/17 conducted one (1) mounted and one (1) foot patrol to the Northwest and Southeast of the Bde Base Position. At 131410H 600 pounds of rice was discovered vicinity XT 605245. Another cache at XT 621230 contained five (5) tons of rice. At 131540H an unoccupied trench was discovered vicinity XT 619234 running approximately 400 meters to the West.

On D+5 the occurrence of ground fire against Bde helicopters was greatly reduced, indicating effectiveness of the Bde's search and destroy operation and retaliatory fires on VC snipers.

At the end of D+5 CP locations were as follows: D/16 Armor - XT 614233
All Others - No Change

During the night the infantry battalions received sporadic sniper and mortar fire. At 132210H one VC was killed trying to infiltrate the 1/RAR perimeter. At 140300H 1/503d Inf captured two (2) VC inside their perimeter who were wearing gas masks. The VC had apparently remained hidden in holes in the area for several days.

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g. D+6 (14 January 1966) - On D+6 the 173d Abn Bde (Sep) terminated Operation "CRIMP" in the HOBO region and redeployed all units to the Bde Base at Bien Hoa by a combination of helicopter lift and motor convoy. Movement began at 140800H when 1/503d Inf was extracted from LZ FEBRUARY vicinity XT 634307. The last lift departed the LZ at 140912H. 1/RAR and 2/503d Inf were extracted from LZ JULY, vicinity XT 648268, commencing at 140945H and completing at 141115H. HU-1 and H-47 helicopters were utilized for the extractions. Troop E/17th Cavalry led the returning motor convoy, crossing the Start Point vicinity XT 616226 at 141000H. The main body began moving at 141030H with the artillery remaining in position until extraction of the Inf battalions was completed. The helicopter extraction and the motor convoy were covered by continuous TAC Air support and armed helicopters on station. Light small arms fire was received within the AO by the troop carrying helicopters and the motor convoy trail party received automatic weapons fire at XT 667113. The fire was returned and one (1) VC was estimated killed. The motor convoy closed into the Bde Base at Bien Hoa at 141430H, terminating Operation "CRIMP".

5. SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Task Force 3/319th Artillery:

(1) Size of Force - Three (3) six (6) gun 105mm howitzer batteries, two (2) four (4) gun 105mm batteries and one (1) six (6) gun 155mm battery.

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) Preparation of LZ's "MARCH", "APRIL" and "MAY" on 8 January 1966.

(b) On call missions to Bde, 1st Inf Div, and ARVN forces from 8-14 January 1966.

(c) Harassing and Interdiction fires from 8-14 January 1966.

(d) Quick reaction fires on VC locations established by intelligence elements from 8-14 January 1966.

(e) Suppressive fires during extraction on 14 January 1966.

(3) Results and Effectiveness: The Bde's artillery fired 516 missions and 7401 rounds during Operation "CRIMP". Artillery fires were very effective during LZ preparations and during extraction, reducing VC resistance to only light ground fire. On several occasions during the operation air observers observed rounds falling in the midst of VC elements and positions, attesting to the excellent results of on call missions. Retaliatory fires on suspected VC locations were very effective. The occurrence of ground fire lessened with each day of the operation. Artillery fires were not effective against the tunnel and bunker systems in the AO except in the case of a direct hit.

(4) Timeliness: Because of coordination effected in the Bde Fire support Coordination Center between Artillery, Army Air, and Air Force elements, the timeliness of artillery fires was excellent. Rapid reaction to enemy intelligence continued to be effected.

b. U.S. Air Force:

(1) Size of Force: A total of 142 Tactical Air sorties and thirty-two (32) Forward Air Controller sorties were flown during Operation "CRIMP".

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) Convoy cover from Bao Trai to Position KING on 8 January 1966.

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- (b) Preparation of LZ's "MARCH", "APRIL" and "MAY" on 8 January 1966.
- (c) Preplanned and on call missions from 8-14 January 1966.
- (d) Quick-reaction fires on VC locations established by intelligence elements.
- (e) Flare ships were on call at all times throughout the operation.
- (f) An airborne FAC was available at all times during the operation either in the air over the AO or on strip alert at Lai Khe (IT 7638). Ground FAC teams were furnished to each infantry battalion.
- (g) Convoy cover for return to Bien Hoa Base Position on 14 January 1966.

(3) Results and Effectiveness: During Operation "CRIMP" Air Force support was outstanding. Preparations of LZ's were on target, effectively reducing VC resistance to only light ground fire. On call missions were timely with outstanding effect. On 10 January bombs dropped in support of E/17 were seen to fall in the midst of groups of VC. On 13 January a strike in support of 1/503d Inf destroyed a VC mortar position with an estimated 20 VC killed. No organized VC action was encountered during the motor convoys. The ground and airborne FAC's were very effective, resulting in timely and accurate fires throughout the operation.

(4) Timeliness: See 5, b, (3) above.

(5) Air Request Net Utilized: The SOP pre-planned air request net was utilized during Operation "CRIMP". Requests were initiated by the commanders on the ground and sent to the Brigade Tactical Air Control Group (TAGG) by the ground FAC or through the Airborne FAC. The request was then relayed to the III Corps Direct Air Support Center. On occasion missions were generated at Bde level based on intelligence information. If a mission was requested when TAC air and the Airborne FAC were both airborne, no further coordination was required and the strike was conducted.

(6) Air-Ground Marking System: In all cases targets for TAC air strikes were marked by the airborne FAC using White Phosphorous rockets.

c. Army Air:

(1) Size of Force: During Operation "CRIMP" army air support was provided by the following units:

- (a) Company A, 82nd Aviation Battalion.
- (b) 173d Aviation Platoon.
- (c) 161 Rooce Flight (Australian)
- (d) 145th Aviation Battalion:
 - 1 Company A, 501st Aviation Battalion
 - 2 118th Aviation Company (AMBL IT)
 - 3 68th Aviation Company (AMBL IT)
 - 4 197th Aviation Company (UTT)
 - 5 74th Aviation Company (FW IT)

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- (e) 155th Aviation Company (ANBL LT)
- (f) 147th Aviation Company (HCPT MED)
- (g) 73 Aviation Company (ASL)

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) Three (3) heliborne assaults and three (3) extractions for a total of 679 sorties.

(b) Armed helicopter cover for all convoys and close in support to ground forces for a total of 292 sorties.

(c) Daily resupply missions from Bien Hoa to the Bde Base and from the Bde Base to infantry battalions for a total of 622 sorties.

(d) Command and Liaison support when requested for a total of 193 sorties.

(e) Radio relay when required for two (2) sorties.

(f) Medical evacuation flights (does not include 57th Medical Detachment) - 14 sorties.

(g) Because of the non-availability of an air strip in the operational area resupply was accomplished exclusively by rotary winged aircraft.

(3) Results and Effectiveness: During Operation "CRIMP" Army Aviation flew a total of 1790 sorties in support of the Bde. The results produced were excellent. All heliborne assaults and extractions were executed smoothly. Resupply and medical evacuation were accomplished when requested with a minimum of time lag. Radio contact was maintained between Bde headquarters and the ground forces at all times. Armed helicopters support was excellent, helping to reduce VC resistance during the heliborne assaults. On 12 January armed helicopters flying in support of B/2/503 cattle drive, successfully engaged ten (10) VC in a trench, killing three (3), and enabled B Company to accomplish its mission on schedule.

(4) Timeliness: See 5, c, (3) above.

d. D Company, 16th Armor and Prince of Wales Light Horse Troop (Australians):

(1) Size of Force: Eleven (11) M-113 APC's, five (5) M-56 SPAT'S and four (4) 4.2" Mortar APC's from D/16th Armor; and thirteen (13) M-113 APC's from PWLH.

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) Convoy security from Bao Trai to Position KING on 8 January 1966.

(b) Perimeter security of Position KING from 8-14 January 1966.

(c) PWLH combined with E/17th Cavalry to conduct daily search and clear operations around the Bde Base position.

(d) D/16th Armor attached to 2/503d Inf on 9 January for armor/infantry operation.

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(e) D/16th Armor was detached from 2/503d Inf and attached to 1/503d Inf on 10 January to participate in the 1/503d Inf attack to the North.

(f) D/16th Armor detached from 1/503d Inf on 13 January and moved back to Bde Base Position.

(g) Convoy security during the move back to the Bien Hoa Base Position on 14 January 1966.

(3) Results and Effectiveness: Excellent. The mobility and firepower of these units is a deterrent to VC attack on Bde convoys or positions. The APC's and SPATS operated very well in the terrain of the AO. No unsurmountable obstacles were encountered. The mortar platoon is a very effective mobile fire support element which can move right along with the advancing infantry in an attack for closer support. The search and clear operations around the Bde Base Position worked exceedingly well with many VC being killed or captured and numerous rice caches being captured. These operations also helped to prevent VC ground or mortar attacks on the Bde CP area. Use of Armor/Infantry elements enabled 1/503d Inf to push a fast moving blocking force into position before their attack on 11 January, this preventing use of the road running to the Northwest by the VC.

(4) Timeliness: N/A

e. Chemical:

(1) Size of Force: Chemical support on Operation "CRIMP" was provided by the Bde Chemical Section (includes the 51st Chemical Detachment (CDRC)).

(2) How and When Employed: Throughout the operation "Cry Baby" (tear gas grenades) were used by the ground forces to ferret the VC from his bunkers and tunnels. "Mighty Mite" and flame throwers were used as follows:

(a) 8 January 1966 - "Mighty Mite" was used in support of 3/319th Artillery to search numerous bunkers, trenches and short tunnels connecting huts and bunkers in the Northwestern portion of Position KING. The average tunnel length was twenty (20) meters.

(b) 9-11 January 1966 - "Mighty Mite" was used in support of 1/RAR to search and clear the massive tunnel system discovered in its AO. HC Smoke and CS grenades were used in conjunction with "Mighty Mite". After contamination of tunnels, "Mighty Mite" was used to force air back into the tunnels so that friendly troops could search them.

(c) 11 January 1966 - A flame thrower was used in support of 1/503d Inf attack to the North, to burn out VC elements in bunkers, tunnels and spider holes.

(d) 12-13 January 1966 - "Mighty Mite" was used in support of 1/503d Inf to mop up and clear bunker and tunnel systems in their new AO. Some systems were six (6) levels deep and were concrete reinforced in places.

(e) 13 January 1966 - "Mighty Mite" was used to search extensive tunnel system in 2/503d Inf AO.

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(f) In all cases where destruction of tunnels was not possible, CS-1 agent was used to contaminate the system. This was accomplished by placing a bag of CS-1 on a piece of detonating cord between cratering charges inside the tunnel. When the charges were set off, the powder was forced through the tunnel system.

(3) Results and Effectiveness: Excellent. The use of riot control agents to ferret VC and even friendly Vietnamese from bunkers and tunnels saved many lives during Operation "CRIMP". The "Mighty Mite" is a very effective blower to force the agent into the very depths of the tunnels. HC smoke was also used very effectively, often seeping out of hidden exits from the tunnel and thus aiding in the search of the systems. Tunnel systems that could not be destroyed were contaminated with CS-1 agent. It is felt that this agent will effectively negate future use of the tunnels by the VC.

(4) Timeliness: N/A

6. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: During Operation "CRIMP" Bde units were supported from a forward logistical complex located at Position KING. The complex included supply, transportation, maintenance and medical facilities from the 173d Support Battalion. The forward complex was resupplied exclusively by Army rotary wing aircraft, lifting supplies from the Bde Base at Dien Hoa.

a. Supply and Transportation: A Forward Brigade Supply Operations Center (BSOC) was established in the Bde Base position. Representatives from each unit engaged in the operation were located at the BSOC to act on resupply requests and to assist in preparation of supplies for delivery. During this operation the BSOC received 442 tons of supplies from Dien Hoa by 99 H-47 sorties. Bde units not accessible by road received approximately 130 tons of supplies by HU-1 helicopter. Approximately 80 tons of all classes of supplies were required daily to sustain the Bde Task Force.

Brigade Infantry Battalions moved to and from the operational area by helicopter while the remainder of Bde elements moved by motor convoy. No administrative problems were encountered during the operation.

b. Maintenance: Company D (Maint), 173d Support Battalion operated mechanical, signal and armament maintenance facilities at the Forward Bde Base Position. During Operation "CRIMP" the following work was accomplished:

	<u>MECHANICAL</u>	<u>SIGNAL</u>	<u>ARMAMENT</u>
Jobs Received -	3	20	2
Jobs Completed -	3	14	2
Jobs Evacuated -	0	6	0

c. Medical: Company D (Medical), 173d Support Battalion operated the SOP Forward Clearing Station vicinity Position KING during Operation "CRIMP". The 57th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance) provided standby medevac coverage. During the operation the Forward Clearing Station handled forty-seven (47) personnel at sick call. All of these personnel were treated and returned to duty. Graves Registration Teams from the 624th QM Company (DS) supported the Bde both at Dien Hoa and in the operational area.

When required because of severity of wounds personnel were evacuated direct to the 3rd Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) or the 93d Evacuation Hospital in the Dien Hoa area. Wounded personnel coming into the Forward Bde Clearing Station were treated as necessary and then evacuated to the Dien Hoa area or returned to duty.

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d. Communications: The primary means of communications to subordinate units during Operation "CRIMP" was FM radio utilizing an airborne radio relay to extend transmission range when necessary. Wire was installed to all units in the Bde Base Position and was used within the separate Bn base positions. Radio relay systems were established and maintained which gave switch to switch and TOC to TOC telephone communications between the Brigade Forward and Brigade Rear, Brigade Forward and 1st Division, and Brigade Forward and 3d Brigade, 1st Division. Secure teletype was provided to the 1st Inf Div with radio HF providing back-up secure teletype to 1st Inf Div and radio SSB providing back-up to 173d Brigade Rear.

7. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS: The 173d Abn Bde (Sep) Operation "CRIMP" was one of the most successful ever conducted in RVN. Although the number of VC killed has been surpassed on other operations, and the amount of weapons and material captured has been surpassed on other operations, the combined effects of VC killed or captured, weapons and material captured, installations destroyed and intelligence data gathered make "CRIMP" one of the Bde's most successful. The primary mission of the operation was to smash the Politico-Military headquarters of the VC Military Region Number 4. This mission was accomplished in an outstanding manner. Throughout the operation the Brigade continued to effectively exercise its three most important capabilities of Civic Action, Intelligence Gathering and Tactical Operations.

a. Civic Action: In the objective area the Bde encountered large numbers of civilians who obviously had been controlled by the VC for years. Due to this condition, the decision was made to evacuate the population to a secure location where they could not interfere with or betray the Bde's military operations.

Over 2,000 refugees were evacuated from the operations area. All of the refugees were processed through the 172d MI Detachment as suspects. A Brigade medic treated over 200 refugees during detention at the 172d MI Detachment. After processing and questioning, the refugees were evacuated to Trung Lap and turned over to a Civil Affairs team working with the 3d Brigade, 1st Inf Div. This team consisting of 4 officers and 2 EM arrived in the area 11 January 1966. A 3 day supply of MEDCAP supplies was given to the Civil Affairs team to enable them to initiate a MEDCAP program. On 13 January 29 cattle and buffaloes were herded from the 2d Battalion TAOR to Trung Lap and turned over to the Civil Affairs team. The policy with respect to refugees, their belongings, and livestock was not clear and vacillated from one extreme to the other. Another problem encountered in dealing with refugees was that while the operations area was in Dinh Duong province the refugees were evacuated to Hau Nhia province. The province boundary was 400 meters north of the refugee collecting point in Trung Lap. Some difficulty was encountered when the Hau Nhia province USOM and National Police officials had reservations about their responsibility to handle refugees from Binh Duong province. This problem was resolved and the refugees were cared for. Necessary food for the refugees was provided from captured VC grain caches and goods provided by the Brigade. The USOM food goods arrived on 12 January 1966.

During the operation, over 26,000 pounds of rice, 25 bags of fertilizer, 18 bags of peanuts, assorted other foodstuffs, a quantity of farm implements, rubber tubing and 6 bicycles, were recovered from VC caches by Brigade units and turned over to the Civil Affairs team for distribution to refugees and needy families.

Four Psy War missions were flown during Operation "CRIMP". 250,000 Chieu Hoi leaflets were dropped on 3 missions, and an appeal to VC in the tunnels and bunkers was broadcast on one mission.

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b. Intelligence: During this operation a wealth of intelligence data was gathered. Nearly 7,500 documents containing over 100,000 pages were captured which revealed many of the VC's plans, his organization and his past activities. Many of the documents, such as letters and diaries (etc), reveal the inner feelings of the individual VC toward the allied forces and the war in general (see Inclosure 4). Also among the documents were rosters of various sections and lists of Communist Party members which will help to make the destruction of the Military Region 4 headquarters complete.

c. Tactical Operations: The tactical elements of the Lde did an outstanding job during this operation. Ground and air mobility was used very effectively to keep the VC off balance. The ground forces found, fixed and systematically destroyed the objective, thus causing the enemy untold damage by destroying one of his most secure base areas in Vietnam. The results of Operation "CRIMP" were as follows:

(1) U.S. Forces:

KIA - Fifteen (15)
WIA - Seventy-Two (72)
MIA - None
EQUIP LOST - None

(2) Australian Forces:

KIA - Eight (8)
WIA - Thirty (30)
MIA - None
EQUIP LOST - None

(3) New Zealand Forces:

KIA - None
WIA - None
MIA - None
EQUIP LOST - None

(4) Viet Cong Forces:

KIA - Confirmed - 128
Possible - 190
VCC - 91
SUSPECTS - 509
REFUGEES - 1031
BALLIERS - 1
TOTAL - 1950

(5) Weapons:

1 Czech 7.92 LMG KB30	2 US Enfield M1917
1 US BAR	2 US M-1 Carbines
1 US 57mm RR	2 Chicom AR 47
1 French 7.5 LMG 1924	2 Home-made carbines
4 Russian Model 1891/30	2 Chicom K50 SMG
4 US M-1 Rifles	4 Chicom 12.7mm AAMG
13 German Mauser M-K	2 60mm Mortars
6 French MAS 36 Rifles	3 US M-3 SMG
3 US cal 45 Thompson SMG	1 Home-made shotgun
4 French MAT 49 SMG	1 US M-2 Carbine
31 Chicom M44 Carbines	1 US M-1903 Rifle

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(6) Ammunition:

22,543 rounds of assorted small arms ammunition
300 grenades
10 rifle grenades
5 Recoilless Rifle rounds
51 mortar rounds
1 - 105mm round

(7) Documents: 7,488 - over 100,000 pages

(8) Communications: 3 altered transistor radios, 2 field telephones

(9) Transportation: 9 Sampans, 8 bicycles

(10) Medical: 760 medical items

(11) Foodstuffs: 57 tons of rice, 60 pounds of salt

(12) Miscellaneous:

151 pounds of clothing	12 BAR magazines
Miscellaneous packs	1 50 cal tripod
Miscellaneous gas masks	2800 pounds of fertilizer
3 accessory kits for 12.7mm	1,300 pounds of peanuts
1 helmet liner	1 gasoline engine
1 duplicating machine	2 dynamotors
4 typewriters	1 tape recorder
1 telescope	

8. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED:

a. General:

(1) The Politico-Military Headquarters of VC Military Region 4 was destroyed with many VC killed or captured, many weapons, much equipment and valuable intelligence information captured.

(2) The civilian population of the area was thoroughly indoctrinated by the VC and it will require much civic action and psychological warfare effort to swing them to the side of the allies.

(3) The entrances to tunnels in the AO were generally very well camouflaged and could only be discovered by probing.

(4) The price of entry into an operational area is often costly. We should be prepared to stay until the job is finished.

b. Movement:

(1) The motor convoy moving from Dao Trai to Position KING was required to stop and wait for completion of the B-52 strike. These strikes must be cut off on schedule to avoid a delay to the remainder of the sequence of events.

(2) Aircraft moving through the Bde AO received ground fire on numerous occasions. However, as a result of immediate and violent retaliatory fires in all cases, the occurrence of ground fire lessened with each day of the operation.

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(3) Landings in each of the three battalion areas were completed more rapidly than ever before. This was made possible by the fact that the elements landed in a staggered trail which permitted quicker "sitting" and quick exiting of the troops.

(4) This was the first operation where the Brigade Forward Support Base was established in an area not adjacent to an air strip. Resupply was conducted very successfully with exclusive use of rotary winged aircraft.

c. Tactics:

(1) The long metal rod which is part of the 105mm howitzer ammunition box was found to be a useful probe in bunkers and tunnels.

(2) Instances of receiving friendly mortar fire from the adjacent Bde were experienced by 1/503d Inf. The need for a control fire coordination center established at division appears to be necessary whenever two or more brigades are employed adjacent to each other. Such a center is particularly needed when supporting artillery is fired from numerous location into the AO of each Bde.

(3) There were continual interruptions of the communications of some battalions and the Brigade Command Net by other stations using the same frequency. This is intolerable for efficient operations and must be corrected by the allocation of frequencies from the standpoint of geographical location.

(4) The Armor/Infantry tactics employed by E/17 Cavalry and FWIH in the vicinity of the Bde Base and by D/16 Armor with 1/503d and 2/503d were extremely successful. Continued use of these tactics will be effected when terrain permits.

(5) When a ground follow-up to a B-52 strike is planned, the time of ordnance delivery should be greatly compressed. The present time span of delivery and long pauses between flights enables the enemy to move out of the area or to get into deep holes after the initial drop. When a ground force follows a B-52 strike, the mass delivery of CDU's with an immediate follow-up airborne assault in the proximity of the strike would achieve the optimum surprise and highest probability of success.

d. Chemical:

(1) Tear gas, smoke and flame were used to good advantage during this operation to ferret the VC from their tunnels and to deny future use of them.

(2) The use of HC smoke should be limited in tunnels which are to be searched unless personnel are equipped with oxygen masks. The smoke will quickly "drive out" all the oxygen in the tunnels.

(3) Personnel searching tunnels should work in teams of two (2) or more men.

(4) Some sort of communications between searchers and personnel above ground must be maintained. Also a system to measure the depth and length of tunnels should be developed (See paragraph 4, c).

(5) In some of the more elaborate tunnel systems, it was discovered that gas traps had been constructed (See Inclosure 5). Three types discovered included:

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- (a) Water lock (flooded section of tunnel)
- (b) Trap doors.
- (c) Digging the tunnel in a zig-zag or rising and lowering courses to slow down movement of gas.
- (6) Suggested method of clearing, searching and destroying/contaminating tunnels:
 - (a) To clear enemy troops out of the tunnels, the M7A3 CS grenade blown into the tunnel with the "Mity Mite" is recommended. One or two grenades should be adequate for most systems, and should not create a serious oxygen deficient atmosphere. The "Mity Mite" can be used then to blow some of the CS out of the tunnel so it can be searched.
 - (b) The tunnel can then be searched as far as the first trap door or air lock. If trap doors or airlock is discovered, it can be removed and the "Mity Mite" can be used to blow the CS which still lingers, further into the tunnel complex.
 - (c) When a main tunnel of a complex is located, a demolition charge set off in it, may unseat any additional trap doors or air locks, enabling further flushing and searching.
 - (d) After tunnels are searched, they should be destroyed with demolitions and/or contaminated with CS-1 (powder). One effective way of doing this without contaminating personnel is to place a 6 or 8 pound bag of CS-1 on a strand of detonating cord between cratering charges inside the tunnel. In one instance where this was done, CS-1 was forced approximately 200 meters through a tunnel, and resulted in the tunnel areas between cratering charges being thoroughly contaminated and sealed.
 - (e) When time is limited, CS grenades (M7A3) blown into tunnel with "Mity Mite" will contaminate tunnel for one week or more.
 - (f) M25A3 CS grenades (baseball type) can be used to contaminate small tunnels, bunkers and spider holes. If these areas are sealed the contamination should last indefinitely.

d. Civic Action: The policy with respect to refugees, their belongings, and livestock was not clear and vacillated from one extreme to the other. A firm policy must be established prior to the beginning of an operation.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Leo J. Mercier
LEO J. MERCIER
2d Lt, AGC
Asst Adj Gen

Distribution:

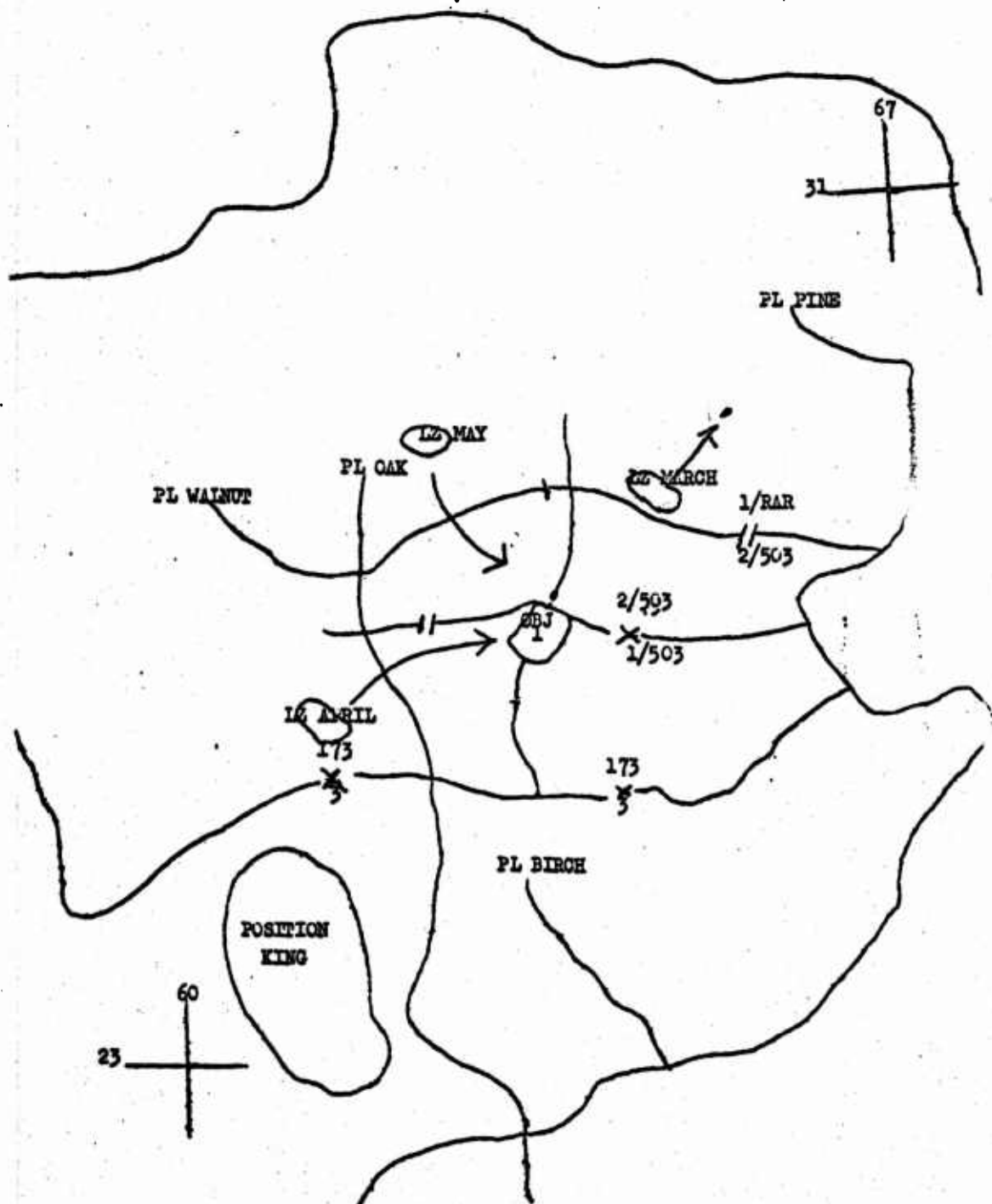
- 2 - MAC J34
- 1 - MAC J2
- 1 - MAC T
- 1 - CINCUSARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-MH
- 1 - CG, USAFV, ATTN: Historical Division
- 4 - CG, 1st Infantry Division

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INCLOSURE 1

22

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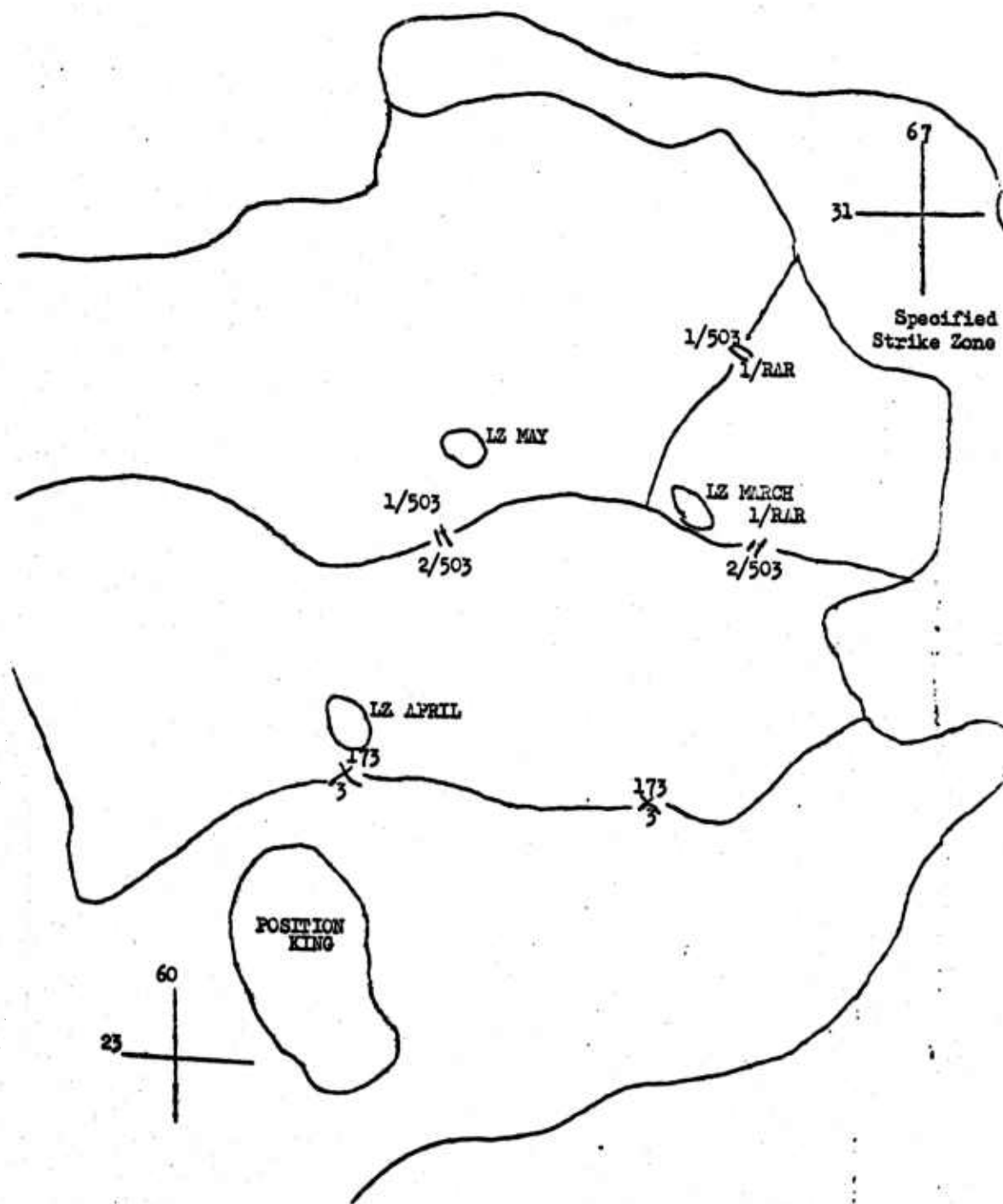
ENCLOSURE #1

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INCLOSURE 2

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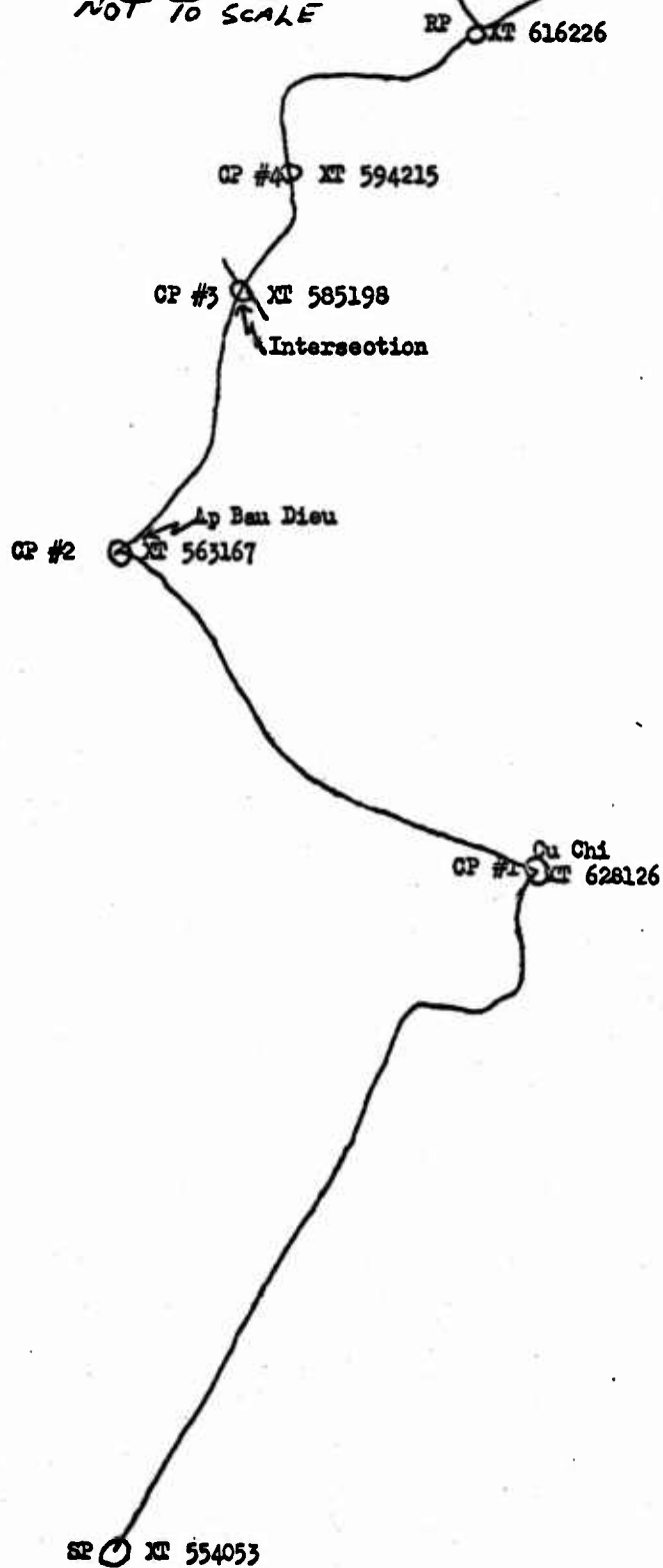
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INCLOSURE #2

INCLOSURE 1

LC

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STRIP MAP
NOT TO SCALE



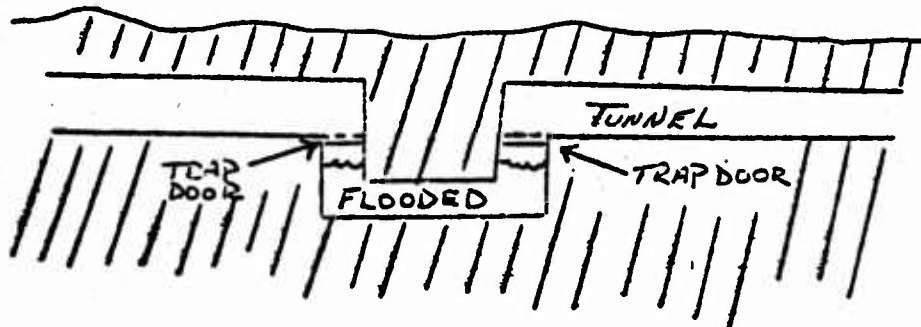
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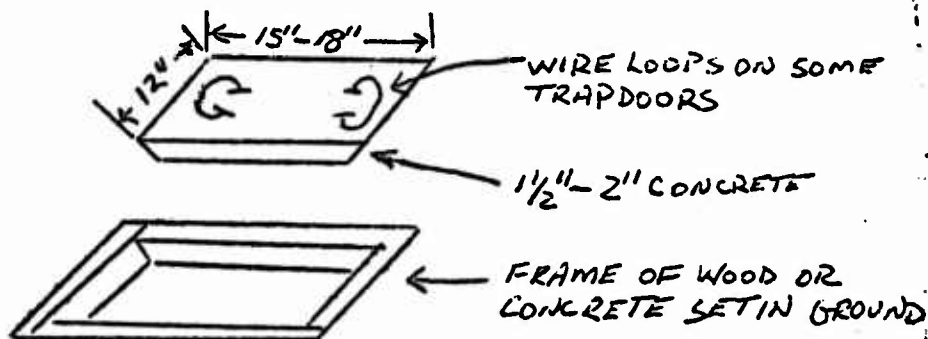
INCLOSURE 4

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TUNNEL CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

A. Water Lock.

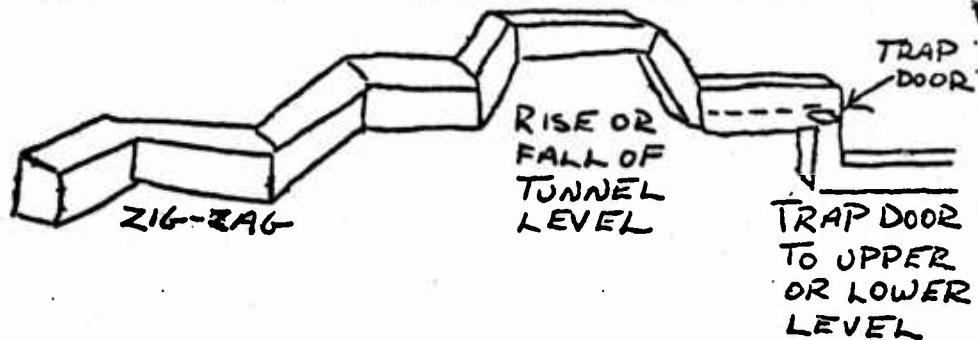


B. Trapdoor Construction.



Note: In some instances, trapdoors were covered with a thin layer of dirt and were located by probing with a bayonet. One trapdoor was booby-trapped with a grenade.

C. Other baffle systems which impeded the flow of gas or smoke.



INCLOSURE # 4

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INCLOSURE 5

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TRANSLATION REPORT

ENEMY DOCUMENTS

Large Sign at Village Entrance:

"Who causes the scene that burns houses, makes the suffering, slaughter to our population. That is America enemy, and puppets, we swear that we don't live with them in the same place. Though we are in misery, we will unite together. Determine to clear out the resented we will drive out the imperialist until our population, and country are peaceful for ever and after".

Diary - 11 January 1966:

Have spent four days in tunnel. About 8 to 9 thousand American soldiers were in for a sweep-operation. The attack was fierce, in the last few days. A number of underground tunnels collapsed. Some (of our men) were caught in them and have not been able to get out yet. It is not known what have become of sisters BA, DAY, HONG HAN and TAN HO in these tunnels. In their attempt to provide security for the agency TAM and UT were killed. Their bodies, left unattended and deteriorated, have not been buried yet. In the afternoon, one of our village unit members trying to stay close to the enemy for reconnaissance was killed and his body has not been recovered.

Fifteen minutes ago, enemy jets dropped bombs: houses collapsed and trees fell. I was talking when a rocket exploded 2 meters away and bombs poured down like a torrent.

We should fight them, we should annihilate them, you (US soldiers) will have no way out.....

It is always dark before sunrise. After cold days, warm days will come.....

The most tiresome moment is when one moves up a hill. One must rise up disregarding death and hardships, determined to defeat the American aggressors.

Oh! What hard days, one has to stay in tunnel, eat cold rice with salt, drink unboiled water! However, one is free and feels at ease.

This is the last entry, dated 1445 hours, 11 January 1966, of TRAN BANG's diary.

Document was captured the day following the entry.

Inclosure #5

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J3

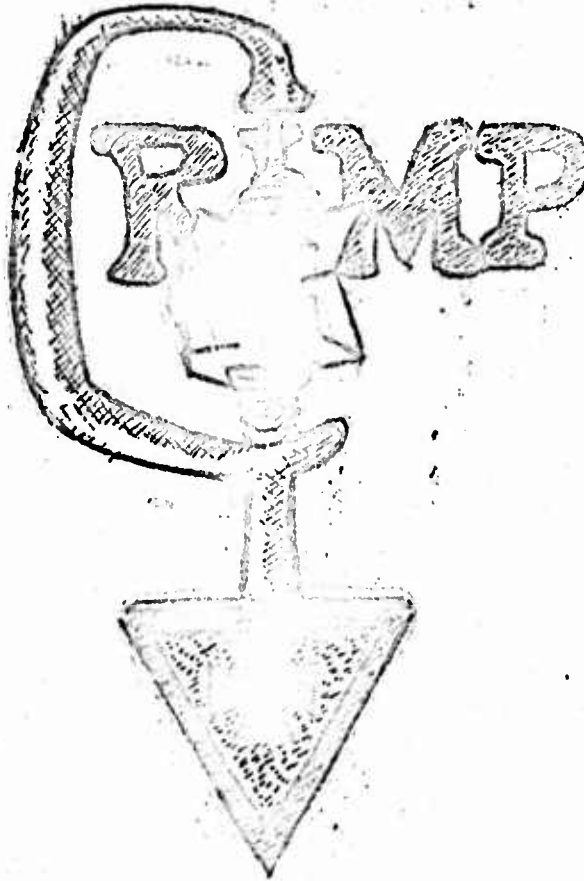
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OPERATION



COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

3D BRIGADE
1st Infantry Division

WILLIAM D BRODBECK
Colonel, Commanding

CONFIDENTIAL

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15 February 1966

THRU: Commanding General 1st Infantry Division ATTN: G3 APO US Forces 96345

TO: Commander
US Military Assistance Command Vietnam
ATTN: J321
APO US Forces 96243

1. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation CRIMP - Search and Destroy.
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 070700 January 1966 - 120630 January 1966.
3. LOCATION: HAU NGHIA Province and CU CHI District XT5820 - XT6724 - XT6529 - XT5928 (Overlay attached - Appendix I).
4. COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters, 3d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.
5. UNIT COMMANDERS:
Colonel William D Brodbeck, CO 3d Brigade
Lt Col George M Shuffer Jr, CO 2/2 Infantry
Lt Col William S Lober Jr, CO 1/16 Infantry
Lt Col Robert Haldane, CO 1/28 Infantry
Lt Col George S Eyster, CO 2/28 Infantry
Lt Col Frank R Tims, CO 2/33 Artillery
6. TASK ORGANIZATION:
Headquarters 3d Brigade
2/2 Infantry
1/16 Infantry
1/28 Infantry
2/28 Infantry
Troop A 1/4 Cav
2/33 Artillery (DS)
2/32 Artillery (-) (GSR)
8/6 Artillery (GSR)
C Company 1st Engr Battalion

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15 February 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)

7. SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. 2/33 Artillery.

(1) Size of force.

(a) Forward Area (TRUNG LAP): 2 six gun 105MM Batteries and Hqs 2/33 Arty, Hqs and C Battery (8" Howitzer SP) 2/32 Arty and C Btry (155MM Howitzer towed), 8/6 Arty general support reinforcing of 2/33 Arty.

(b) Rear Area (LAI KHE): Hqs Btry (-) and B Btry 2/33 Arty, D Btry (8" Howitzer SP) 8/6 Arty and B Btry (175MM Gun SP) general support reinforcing of both forward and rear areas.

(2) How and When Employed.

(a) 2/33 Arty departed LAI KHE by motor convoy on 070320 January 1966 along Hwy 13 to a forward staging area vic DI AN. On the morning of 8 January 1966 the battalion continued over Hwy 1 to vic CU CHI (XT642150) where, with the combined firepower of 2/33 Arty, C Btry 8/6 Arty and C Btry 2/32 Arty an artillery preparation was fired on landing zone JACK. Continuous artillery support was provided by displacing in echelon to vic TRUNG LAP RANGER CAMP (XT590216) from where the remainder of Operation CRIMP was supported.

(b) During Operation CRIMP the battalion fired 1619 105MM Howitzer rounds; 591 155MM Howitzer rounds, 345 eight inch Howitzer rounds.

(3) Results of Fire: The battalions fire support was again outstanding, and was responsible for the destruction of 1 concrete bunker, 54 houses, one sampan (moving in the river). Fire was effectively placed on known and suspected VC locations. Fire support was continuous throughout the operation.

b. Air Force. During Operation CRIMP, one hundred eight (108) close air support sorties were flown in support of the 3d Brigade Task Force. During the 7 days preceeding the airmobile assault 118 preplanned sorties were flown into the area against known AA positions and various bunker and trench systems visible from the air or located by aerial photo. C-130 and C-123 aircraft were used to position 1/28 Inf in PHU LOI on 7 January 1966; and C-123 flights were used prior to and during the problem to preposition ammunition at LAI KHE, for use during Operation CRIMP and subsequently Operation BUCKSKIN.

1 Jan 66	4 Sorties
2 Jan 66	30 Sorties
3 Jan 66	19 Sorties
4 Jan 66	27 Sorties
5 Jan 66	18 Sorties
6 Jan 66	10 Sorties
TOTAL	118 Sorties (Total preplanned sorties)

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7 Jan 66	13 Sorties
8 Jan 66	25 Sorties
9 Jan 66	40 Sorties
10 Jan 66	21 Sorties
11 Jan 66	9 Sorties
TOTAL	108 Sorties (Total CAS Sorties prior to termination at 120430 January 1966)

8. INTELLIGENCE:

a. At the start of Operation GAMMA the strength of VC forces in the area was estimated to be 2500. Elements were believed to be 2d Bn 165 A Regt (strength 600), K17 Bn (strength 300), K18 Bn (strength 250), C 309 Bn (strength 300), C 306 Bn (strength 300), C 32 Bn heavy weapons company (strength 120), Quyet Thang (187) Bn (strength 200) and the C 506 Bn (strength 500). Information regarding VC tactics indicated that they would not mass in force to resist the advance of a two (2) Brigade Task Force. The open terrain did not lend itself to massing a large number of troops. Early detection plus vulnerability to friendly air and artillery superiority were primary factors. It was therefore anticipated that the VC would resort to harassing small arms and mortar fire and employ mines and booby-traps extensively. This proved to be their course of action, throughout the operation. No units were encountered. EMI was received from Headquarters 1st Infantry Division and Headquarters 5th Special Forces Group prior to the operation.

b. Enemy losses during the operation were 22 KIA (BC) and 35 possible KIA. Seventy-five (75) tons of rice were destroyed or captured and 3500 documents were collected and forwarded for evaluation. Extensive tunnel systems were found. Some had as many as 6 tiers underground. Most houses had a tunnel system leading to a trench or fortified position.

c. Aerial photo support from Headquarters 1st Inf Div and 2d Air Division was excellent. Photos showed good ground detail and were accompanied by thorough imagery interpretation reports.

d. The terrain is open with little ground vegetation. Rubber plantations afforded some cover from air observation. Jungle areas, shown on the map, are sparsely wooded areas. The weather was hot and humid with no rain during the operation. The major natural obstacle is the SAIGON RIVER running generally northwest to southeast. Roadability was poor as a result of road cuts and other previous VC destructive activity.

e. CI and IPW teams were employed during the operation. A total of fourteen (14) suspects (VCS) were apprehended, interrogated and evacuated to the CU CHI District Chief Headquarters. One (1) VC wounded was captured.

f. A total of 5000 leaflets were dropped with THEME: "GVN-US Air Power."

(b) [illegible]

(c) [illegible]

(d) [illegible]

(e) [illegible]

(f) [illegible]

(g) [illegible]

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9. MISSION: From 1st Infantry Division FRAG ORDER 1-66 (Operation CRIMP), dated 030800 January 1966:

d. 3d Brigade

(1) Conduct airmobile assault to position forces in blocking position on LINE PECAN between LINE OAK and LINE PINE.

(2) Destroy or capture VC forces attempting to escape to the south.

(3) Attack to the east in zone to destroy VC forces and base camps.

(4) Relieved of requirements stated in OPLANs 4-65 and 6-65 effective D-DAY, H-HOUR.

(5) Relieved of requirements to maintain one Infantry battalion on 6 hour alert effective D-DAY, H-HOUR.

(6) Be prepared to perform mission stated in FRAG ORDER 28-65 on order.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: From 3d Brigade FRAG ORDER 3-66 (Operation CRIMP), dated 061500 January 1966:

EXECUTION:

a. Concept of Operation: 3d Bde TF conducts motor march of 2/28 Inf, 2/33 Arty (-), Troop A 1/4 Cav and Bde TAC CP on Kansas Turnpike to DI AN on 7 January 1966 and on Interstate 70 to vic TRUNG LAP (XT5921) on 8 Jan 66. Tanks of A Troop land tail of 1/28 Inf and Co C 1st Engr Bn join motor column at DI AN on 7 Jan 66. Bde conducts airmobile assault with 1/16 Inf from LAI KHE and 1/28 Inf from PHU LOI to LZ JACK 081000 Jan 66 to occupy blocking positions on LINE PECAN. 2/28 Inf conducts S&D in zone from LINE OAK to LINE PINE. LZ JACK will be prepared by Artillery and CAS commencing 080900 Jan 66.

b. 2/2 Inf:

(1) Open Kansas Turnpike between BEN CAT and PHU QUONG by 070900 Jan 66 and secure until passage of Serial 3.
(2) A Troop 1/4 Cav attached for this mission only.

c. 1/16 Inf:

(1) Open Kansas Turnpike between BEN CAT and LAI KHE by 070700 Jan 66 and secure until passage of Serial 3.
(2) Conduct airmobile assault 081000 Jan 66 on LZ JACK.
(3) Secure LZ JACK for helicopter landing of 1/28 Inf.

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(4) Occupy blocking positions on LINE PEKAN upon completion of 1/28 Inf landings.

d. 1/28 Inf:

- (1) Landtail, escorted by A Trp 1/4 Cav, move from PHU LOI to DI AN when joined by A Trp at PHU LOI on 7 January 1966.
- (2) Conduct airmobile assault 081100 Jan 66 at LZ JACK.
- (3) Occupy blocking positions on LINE PEKAN.
- (4) Conduct S&D in zone from LINE OAK to LINE PINE on order.

e. 2/28 Inf:

- (1) Conduct motor march from LAI KHE to DI AN 7 January 1966 and from DI AN to TRUNG LAP on 8 January 1966.
- (2) Conduct S&D in zone from LINE OAK to LINE PINE.

f. Troop A 1/4 Cav:

- (1) Attached to 2/2 Inf effective 070500 January 1966 for clearance and security of Kansas Turnpike between BEN CAT and PHU CUONG.
- (2) Upon passage of Serial 3, detached from 2/2 Inf and move to PHU LOI to escort 1/28 Inf landtail to DI AN.
- (3) Conduct motor march on Interstate 70 and Route 1A to vic TRUNG LAP on 8 January 1966.
- (4) Screen south flank of Brigade.

g. C Co 1st Engr: Join Brigade landtail at DI AN on 7 Jan 66 and conduct motor march on Interstate 79 and Route 1A to vic TRUNG LAP on 8 Jan 66.

h. 2/33 Arty:

- (1) DS.
- (2) Conduct motor march to DI AN on Kansas Turnpike on 7 Jan 66.
- (3) Conduct motor march to vic TRUNG LAP on Interstate 70 on 8 January 1966.

i. Coordinating Instructions:

- (1) OPORD 1-66 (Operation BUCKSKIN) for march tables and routes.
- (2) Upon completion of Operation GRIMP, Operation BUCKSKIN will be executed.
- (3) 2/2 Inf will employ A Trp 1/4 Cav on south in road clearing mission to facilitate continuation of A Trp mission after release from attachment.
- (4) PHASE LINE BIRCH is identified on the map as the trail running south from XT639284 to XT637274 to APTRIA XT637242 south along a stream to the intersection of the RANCH SON at XT645232.

11. EXECUTION: 2/2 Inf and 1/16 Inf were ordered to clear and secure Route 13 between LAI KHE and PHU CUONG in coordination with elements of the 5th ARVN Infantry Division.

On 6 January 1966 1/16 Inf established two reinforced platoon size night ambush patrols at XT741345 and XT752352. These patrols cleared Hwy 13 from LAI KHE to BEN CAT at first light on 7 January 1966.

On 7 January 1966 2/2 Inf with Trp A 1/4 Cav in coordination with 5th ARVN Division elements secured Hwy 13 from BEN CAT to PHU CUONG. The 2/2 Inf Task Force departed the Bde base camp area at 070700 Jan 66. The road was secured by 070900 Jan 66. To facilitate entry into the objective area on 8 Jan 66, DI AN was selected as a staging area. The 2/28 Inf departed

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15 February 1966

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LAI KHE at 070900 January 1966 for DI AN followed by 2/33 Arty (-), Bde TAC CP, and landtails of 1/16 Inf; these elements were joined at PHU CUONG by the landtail of 1/28 Inf which was flown from PHUC VIEN to PHU LOI on 7 January 1966 by C-123 and C-130 aircraft. All Bde elements moving by land closed into DI AN staging area by 071530 January 1966 without incident. 2/2 Inf returned to the base camp area at 071645 January 1966.

On 8 January 1966 the Bde conducted a two battalion airmobile assault into LZ JACK with 1/16 Inf landing at 081003 January 1966 and 1/28 Inf landing at 081028 January 1966. One of the assault helicopters was hit by VC ground fire but made a safe landing at XT642188 with no injuries to crew or personnel. One of two gunships covering the downed aircraft also received enemy ground fire and, forced down, landed safely at the same location. Both aircraft and crews were extracted without further incident. The 3d Brigade landtail departed DI AN at 080700 Jan 66 closing vic TRUNG LAP RANGAR CCM-POUND at 081200 Jan 66. 2/33 Arty went into firing positions vic CU CAI and fired artillery preparations into LZ JACK prior to the assault landings. After this the battalion displaced batteries by echelon to vic TRUNG LAP. The blocking position along LINE PECAN was occupied by 081200 Jan 66 and 2/28 Inf initiated S&D to the east at that time, searching to a position 300 meters east of LINE BIRCH by 081630 January 1966.

On 9 January 1966 the Brigade conducted S&D with two battalions, 2/28 Inf on the north and 1/28 Inf on the south with 1/16 Inf blocking along LINE PECAN. The battalions covered 3000 meters, reached the north-south road extending from XT657258 to XT664241. 2/2 Inf continued its mission of securing the base camp area vic LAI KHE. 1/16 Inf continued to block along LINE PECAN shifting the block as the S&D progressed to the east. 1/28 Inf conducted S&D to the east destroying a cache of medical supplies and two tons of rice at XT644233, three anti-aircraft positions without weapons at XT648244, and a small hospital area at XT647254—together with some 30 VCS. 2/28 Inf conducted S&D to the east and in the process the battalion apprehended 60 VCS and collected 253 refugees.

On 10 January 1966 the 3d Brigade Task Force continued with 2 battalions conducting S&D in zone and 1 battalion blocking on LINE PECAN. 2/2 Inf continued its mission of securing the 3d Bde base camp at LAI KHE. 1/16 Inf continued to block VC escape routes to the south along LINE PECAN vic XT660240. During the day the battalion destroyed 4 bunkers, 42 houses, 7 sampans, 1000 water containers, 6 tons rice and 600 meters of trenchwork. 1/28 Inf conducted S&D in zone capturing 15 bales of cotton and 10 tons of rice. Companies A and B engaged an unknown number of VC vic XT6625 for about 20 minutes at which time the VC broke contact. Four (4) VC (BC) were killed in this engagement.

On 11 January 1966 the 3d Brigade continued S&D missions in zone. 2/2 Inf continued to secure the base camp at LAI KHE. 1/16 Inf conducted S&D mission from XT662236 to the southwest and southeast for a distance of about 3000 meters while blocking for 1/28 Inf and 2/28 Inf. 34 houses and 3 sampans were destroyed. 1/28 Inf conducted S&D mission sustaining 7 WIA from VC booby-traps and accounted for 1 VC KIA (BC) during the day. 2/28 Inf conducted S&D discovering a VC regional tunnel complex vic XT659251. A large number of maps, charts, chapsticks and documents were discovered in the complex. During the day the battalion accounted for 1 KIA and 2 VC WIA. Troop A 1/4 Cav supported the 2 maneuver battalions during the operation and during the day became engaged in a fire fight vic XT645228. The Trp suffered no casualties and due to airstrikes with napalm and CBU bombs a VC body count was

AVID-WE-C

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/ECS/J3/32) 15 February 1966

impossible. At 120630 January 1966 Operation C&IMP was terminated and the 3d Brigade Operation BUCKSKIN commenced.

12. RESULTS:

a. Captured Equipment:

200	pair	Chopsticks
15	bales	Cotton
5	tons	rice
3500		Documents

b. Destroyed Equipment:

70	tons	Rice
2	tons	Salt
11		Sampans
121		Houses
33		Bicycles
7		Motor cycles
1000		Water Containers
6		Concrete bunkers
2		Russian carbines
6		Blackboards
2		US M-1 carbines
1		M-1 rifle
1500	rounds	Small arms ammunition

c. Friendly losses:

DATE	KIA	WIA
7 Jan	0	0
8 Jan	0	2
9 Jan	0	10
10 Jan	4	15
11 Jan	2	18
12 Jan	0	0
Prior to 0630 hrs		
TOTAL	6	45

d. Enemy losses:

DATE	KIA(BC)	KIA(EST)	VCC	VCS
7 Jan	0	0	0	0
8 Jan	8	7	0	0

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SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)

DATE	KIA (BC)	KIA (EST)	VCC	VCS
9 Jan 66	2	3	0	90
10 Jan 66	6	15	(WIA)	14
11 Jan 66	6	10	0	0
12 Jan 66	0	0	0	0
Prior to 120630 hrs				
TOTAL	22	35	1	114

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: The Brigade S4 planned and coordinated the provision of ammunition resupply by air based on estimated daily consumption rates. Although the estimates were reasonably accurate, the Brigade had a greater amount of ammunition on hand at the conclusion of the operation than at the beginning.

By 8 January 1966, thirty-two days of C-Rations, twenty days of B-Rations and sufficient sundry packs had been accumulated and resupply of these items was not required during the operation. Clothing was distributed from individual or battalion stocks when called for and limited quantities of bunker and barrier materials were delivered over the air line of communications. Two 5000 gallon tankers were moved to the Brigade forward base with the 2/33 Artillery on D-DAY for the deisel and moras requirements. On two occasions, the armored vehicles of the cavalry troop received Class III resupply by air due to the difficult road conditions and the enemy activity.

Individual soldiers prepared an A Bag with a complete change of clothing and foot gear. The A Bags were flown into the operational area on call of the battalions and the sealed clothing extracted to the 624 Quartermaster Laundry Unit at LAI KHE. This technique worked extremely well in maintaining personal hygiene.

Company C, 1st Engineer Battalion operated a water point at XT596220 and purified 10,000 gallons of water during the operation.

As a result of previous experience, a determination was made that when flying time from the Brigade base to the operational area does not exceed thirty minutes, one way, the logistical base should not be established in the forward area. In this operation the logistical base remained at LAI KHE.

The amount of tentage and equipment in the Brigade CP area was increased subsequent to D-DAY and ten lifts of UH1D helicopters were required to extract this additional equipment at the conclusion of Operation CHIMP.

14. N/A.

15. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS:

Each operation enhances the Brigade's ability to effectively defeat the Viet Cong. However, only by alert observation can we discover new military techniques in these operations. Some of the lessons learned in Operation CHIMP are:

AVID-WB-C

15 February 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)

a. Effects of B-52 strikes were difficult to assess. Trench networks were found undamaged within 25 yards of craters.

b. CS riot control agent was used without much success. Tunnels were baffled by the VC to prevent effective use of CS. Positive results were obtained when men went into tunnels.

c. Operations in unfamiliar areas, such as these, tend to prove that instead of sweeping a zone, a patrol base with patrols to find the enemy and their positions and equipment would be much more effective.

d. The rapid search and destroy operation during the period 8 - 10 January 1966 forced units to skim over areas that might have yielded VC, weapons or equipment. It was not until 11 January 1966, when a battalion base camp was established and methodical searching was initiated, that quantities of weapons, VC and documents were uncovered. Operations should be phased to exploit the opportunities uncovered during search as opposed to a time/date phasing.

e. The APC's and tanks of the Cavalry Troop proved very effective in the area of operation. During tanks-infantry sweeps the suppressive fire of the tanks and APC's reduced the danger of sniper fire. In many cases the armored vehicles detonated AP mines that would have caused casualties among the Infantry.

f. The APC's were used effectively on a number of occasions to evacuate wounded personnel to safe areas where Dustoff medical evacuation could be accomplished.

g. Aerial resupply was conducted throughout the period of the operation utilizing UH-1 aircraft, with 9 lifts per day (approximate tonnage 13,000 lbs per day). Each battalion should be allocated at least 1 UH-1 aircraft daily for resupply all day and two additional UH-1 aircraft from 1530 - 1930 hours. When given less than this the resupply is too time consuming and delays operations in the mornings and becomes extremely hazardous if continued after dark.

In Operation CRIMP the units of the Brigade again proved that they measure up to every task. Instead of the fast, violent action of BAN BANG, CHON THANH and the NHA MOT battles, Operation CRIMP was a continuous grinding push against tunnels, bunkers and trenches filled with small size VC units. A different combat technique is required when a man goes into a tunnel after a VC, or against a single sniper that cannot be seen. However, the same amount of courage is required in this type of fighting. In every instance the men and the units of the Brigade measured up to the test.

MACV/RCS/J3/32

MACV/RCS/J3/32

MACV/RCS/J3/32

MACV/RCS/J3/32

AVID-WB-C

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32) 15 February 1966

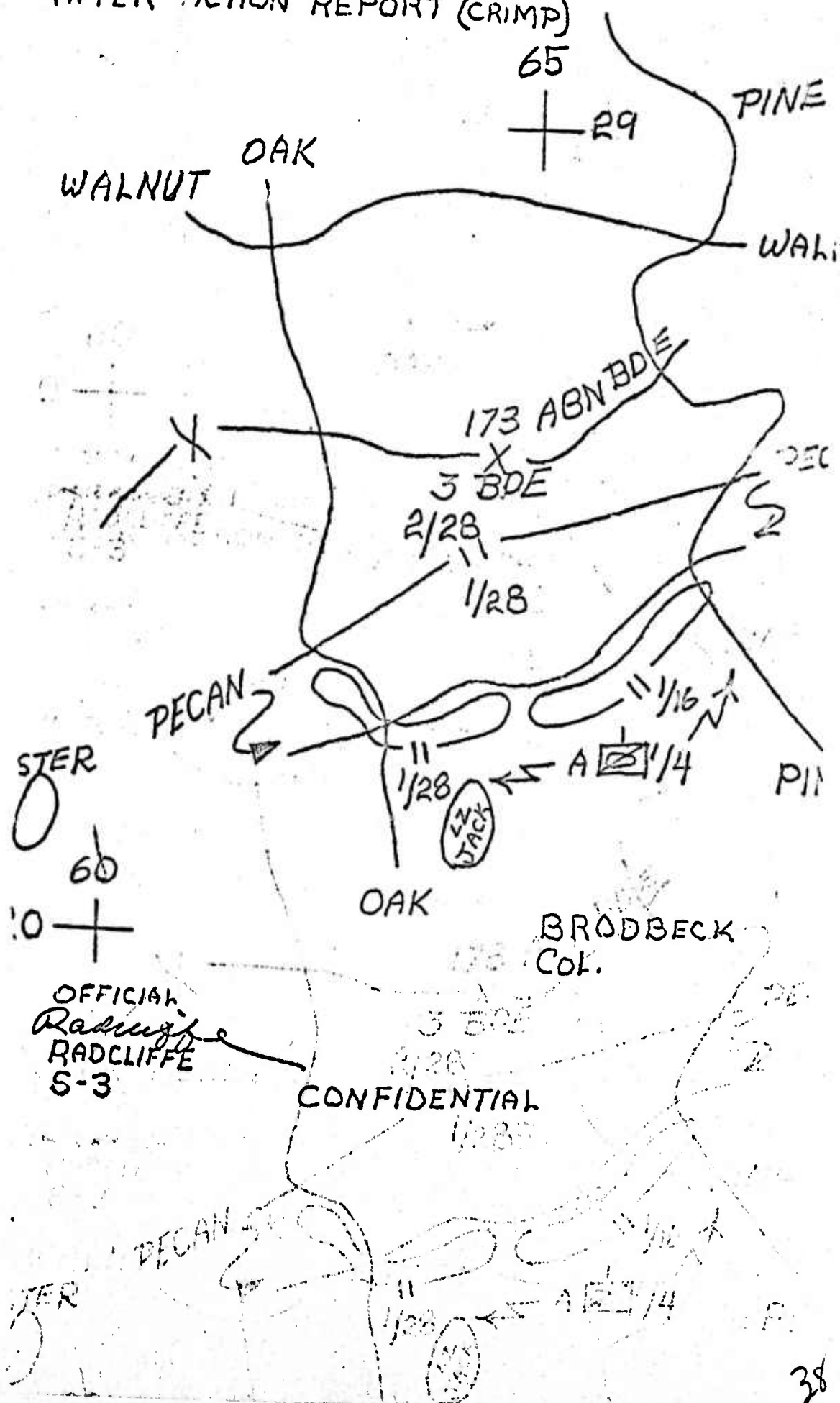
The magnificent esprit of all members of the command and the cooperative spirit of all the attached and supporting units has resulted in another outstanding performance by this Brigade Task Force in the spirit of the Big Red One: "No mission too difficult - No sacrifice too great - Duty first."

William D Brodebeck
WILLIAM D BRODEBECK
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

Copies Furnished:

MACV J2
MACT
Commander 2d Air Div
Commanding General 1st Inf Div

APPENDIX I TO CONFIDENTIAL
AFTER ACTION REPORT (CRIMP)



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HEADQUARTERS 3D BRIGADE
1st Infantry Division
APO US Forces 96345

AVID- 1B-C

3 March 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (ALCV/RCS/ J3/32)

THRU: Commanding General
1st Infantry Division
ATTN: G3
APO US Forces 96345

TO: Commander
US Military Assistance Command Vietnam
ATTN: J321
APO US Forces 96243

1. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation BUCKSKIN - Search and Destroy and security for 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division.
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 120630 January 1966 - 311600 January 1966.
3. LOCATION: HAU NGUIN Province - CU CHI District XT5625 to XT6725 to XT7121 to XT6512 to XT5617 to XT5625. See appendix 1 (Overlay).
4. COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters 3d Brigade 1st Infantry Division.
5. UNIT COMMANDERS:
Colonel William D Brodbeck, CO 3d Brigade
Lt Col George H Shuffer Jr, CO 2d Battalion 2d Infantry
Lt Col William S Loper Jr, CO 1st Battalion 16th Infantry
Lt Col Robert Haldane, CO 1st Battalion 28th Infantry
Lt Col Kyle W Bowie, CO 2d Battalion 28th Infantry (13 - 31 January 1966)
Lt Col George S Myster, CO 2d Battalion 28th Infantry (12 January 1966)
Lt Col Frank R Tins, CO 2d Battalion 33d Artillery
6. TASK ORGANIZATION:
Headquarters 3d Brigade
2d Battalion 2d Infantry
1. 1st Battalion 16th Infantry
1st Battalion 28th Infantry
2d Battalion 28th Infantry
Troop A 1st Squadron 4th Cavalry
2d Battalion 33d Artillery

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2d Battalion 32d Artillery (-) (GSR)
8th Battalion 6th Artillery (GSR)
C Company 1st Engineer Battalion

7. SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. 2d Battalion 33d Artillery.

(1) Size of Force.

(a) Forward Area (TRUNG LAMP - CU CHI): 2 six gun 105mm batteries and Headquarters 2/33 Artillery; Headquarters Battery and C Battery (8" Howitzer SP); 2d Battalion 32 Artillery with C Battery (155mm Howitzer towed); 8th Battalion 6th Artillery attached (GSR).

(b) Rear Area (LAI KHE): Headquarters Battery (-) 2d Battalion 33d Artillery; B Battery 2d Battalion 33d Artillery; D Battery (8" Howitzer SP). 8th Battalion 6th Artillery and B Battery (175mm gun SP) 2d Battalion 32d Artillery (GSR).

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) At the start of Operation BUCKSKIN the 2d Battalion 33d Artillery was deployed at TRUNG LAMP in support of the 3d Brigade Task Force. On 24 January 1966 the battalion began displacing to vic CU CHI to assist in securing this area for the 2d Brigade 25th Infantry Division.

(b) During Operation BUCKSKIN the battalion fired 6,268 105mm howitzer rounds, 1,115 155mm howitzer rounds and 959 eight inch howitzer rounds.

(3) Results of Fire: Enemy losses due to the excellent fires of the battalion were 22 KIA (body count) and a possible 72 KIA plus numerous buildings destroyed. Fire support was continuous throughout the operation and was effectively placed on known and suspected enemy locations accounting for the enemy KIA's mentioned above.

b. Air Force: During Operation BUCKSKIN the Air Force flew two hundred eighty eight (288) close air support sorties in support of the 3d Brigade Task Force. C-47 flare ships were used on two nights (13-14 January) to assist the 3d Brigade Task Force during night perimeter defence. The C-47 "Puff" was used on the night of 14-15 January 1966 in close support of the Brigade and its fires were very effective in suppressing enemy mortar fire. C-123 flights were used prior to and during Operation BUCKSKIN to preposition ammunition at LAI KHE.

12 January 1966	3 sorties
13 January 1966	25 sorties
14 January 1966	15 sorties
15 January 1966	12 sorties
16 January 1966	10 sorties

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17 January 1966	8 sorties
18 January 1966	71 sorties
19 January 1966	40 sorties
20 January 1966	14 sorties
21 January 1966	TET
22 January 1966	TET
23 January 1966	TET
24 January 1966	14 sorties
25 January 1966	24 sorties
26 January 1966	17 sorties
27 January 1966	9 sorties
28 January 1966	4 sorties
29 January 1966	7 sorties
30 January 1966	9 sorties
31 January 1966	6 sorties

288 (Total CAS sorties flown during
Operation BUCKSKIN)

Unless the Air Force places the FAC vehicle and radios close to the 3d Brigade Aviation Section (Fwd), who has a direct line to the artillery, it is difficult for the sorties to know when it is safe to come into an area. A means should be found whereby the FAC can talk directly with supporting artillery units to coordinate airstrikes and artillery fire.

8. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Estimate of VC strength: Information received prior to the initiation of the operation indicated that an estimated 2,500 VC were in the operational area. The VC order of battle appeared to be the 2d Bn 165th Regiment, K17, K18, C303, C306, C506 and 187 Battalions, and the C32 Heavy Weapons Company.

b. Source of Intelligence Received Prior to the Operation: The primary source of pre-operation intelligence was Headquarters 1st Infantry Division. The 5th Special Forces Group (airborne) and the G2 advisers of III Corps and 5th ARVN Division also responded to our request for intelligence information. Photo coverage received through 1st Infantry Division from 2d Air Division was outstanding. The photos were received on a timely basis and were accompanied by detailed imagery interpretation reports.

c. Situation anticipated in Objective Area prior to Operation: The Brigade Commander considered several enemy courses of action. He believed that the VC would adopt a course of action to use mines and booby traps extensively to delay and dishearten the Brigade maneuver elements in their attack, to harass with small arms and mortar fire, and to employ small probing patrols. It was considered likely also that the VC would elect to defend any critical base camps or installations in the area, and reports indicated these were present. The Brigade Commander decided that the VC would not choose to engage major units due to the size US force being employed.

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d. Situation Encountered During the Operation: The VC did not present a lucrative target at any time. A fantastic complex of tunnels was located and destroyed without major opposition. It is obvious that other tunnels, not located by the 3d Brigade, also exist. Harassment was continuous throughout the operation but the harassing elements continuously avoided brigade elements. VC strength is estimated to have been no more than local guerrillas and a few hard-core cadres. One hundred forty eight service records of the D308 Company were captured but there is no evidence that the unit was encountered in the operation. One VC captured by the 1st Battalion 28th Infantry was identified as a member of the CLO Company.

e. Terrain Features, Obstacles and Weather: The terrain in the area is open with little ground vegetation except in the FILHOL Rubber Plantation which affords some concealment from air observation. Areas shown on the map as jungle are sparsely wooded areas. The weather was hot and humid with no rain during the operation. The major natural obstacle is the SAIGON RIVER running in a northwest to southeast direction. Roadability was poor as a result of road cuts and other previous VC destructive activity. Red haze emissions locations changed from the southwest to the northeast side of the SAIGON RIVER. It is believed that tunnel systems possibly pass under the river since constant surveillance of the river did not detect river crossings on the surface.

f. Psychological Warfare: A total of 170,000 leaflets were air dropped during the operation, themes were: (1) Defeat by Powerful Allied and ARVN, (2) GVN-US Air Power, (3) Are these your Friends or Enemies, (4) We are Friends of the People, Victory for the GVN is Inevitable, and (5) Don't Shoot at Dustoff Choppers.

On 26 January 1966 a rallier turned himself into the Brigade and he willingly taped a message to other VC in the CU CHI area to give themselves up and not to be afraid of the Americans. This was all accomplished in a period of 3 hours from the time he turned himself in. The equipment to broadcast the tape (ULH/5) at Brigade level did not function due to an electrical short. An aircraft was requested from Division G5 (C-47 type) and a mission approved and scheduled for that evening. When the aircraft arrived on station only two of its six speakers worked, thus the broadcast was considered ineffective. Therefore, due to the poor broadcasting equipment used in support of the Psy/War program, the tremendous effect that could have been obtained was lost due to the time factor which elapsed before the equipment could be returned and repaired. Only by taking timely advantage of sure opportunities will our Psy/War program be of real help and value in defeating the Viet Cong.

9. MISSION: From 1st Infantry Division Frag Order 28-65 (GREEN LIGHT TAC):

3. EXECUTION:

a. Concept of Operation: 1st Inf Div conducts operations in the CU CHI area during the period 10 Jan thru 10 Feb 66 with one Brigade supported by air and artillery. Brigade will move to assigned TAC by air and ground. ARVN Forces will conduct operations in an adjacent TAC to block VC forces attempting to withdraw.

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c. 3rd Brigade:

(1) One Battalion from 1st Bde attached during the period of this operation.

(2) Conduct operations in TAOI ALICE.

(3) Destroy VC forces and base camps in TAOI ALICE.

(4) Protect movement of 2nd Brigade, 25th Inf Div to base camp via CU CHI.

(5) Redeploy to LAI KHE on order.

(6) Initial FCL between 3rd Brigade and ARVN Forces is boundary between TAOI's BETTY and ALICE.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS: From 3d Brigade OPORD 1-66 (Operation BUCKSKIN):

3. EXECUTION:

a. Concept of Operation: 3d Bde Task Force conducts Operation BUCKSKIN by moving to the vic of TRUNG L.P. (XT5921) by motor march and helicopter and initiates S&D operations within TAOI ALICE using three Infantry battalions and a Cavalry Troop as maneuver force. Fire support will be provided by DS artillery battalion from vic TRUNG L.P., by GS (Reinf) artillery units from vic LAI KHE and PHU LOI, and by USAF tactical fighter units. PHASE I will consist of the movement of forces from base camps to the objective area on 8 and 9 Jan 66. 2/28 Inf, 2/33 Arty (-), a Trp 1/4 Cav, C Co 1st Ingr and Bde TAC CP will conduct a motor march to a staging area via DI AN on 8 January and from DI AN to vic CUSTER (TRUNG L.P.) on 9 January. 1/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf will land by helicopter at the TRUNG L.P. airfield on 9 January. PHASE II will consist of the conduct of combat operations in the southeast portion of TAOI ALICE commencing on 10 January 1966. PHASE III will be the conduct of operations in the northwest portion of TAOI ALICE. PHASE IV will consist of the securing of the base camp site selected by 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div and securing of the route for movement of 3d Bde Task Force elements to base camps via LAI KHE and PHOU C VINH.

b. 2/2 Inf:

- (1) Secure Bde base camp perimeter via LAI KHE.
- (2) Conduct security operations via LAI KHE to a distance of 4 km from Bde base perimeter.
- (3) Be prepared for commitment during PHASE III or PHASE IV.
- (4) Secure Hwy 13 from LAI KHE to BEN C.T on 8 Jan 66.
- (5) Annex F (Security Plan - LAI KHE).

c. 1/16 Inf:

- (1) Move by helicopter on 9 Jan to CUSTER (TRUNG L.P. airfield).

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- (2) Establish assembly area vic FOSYTH.
- (3) Prepare to initiate S&D operations in zone on order.

d. 1/28 Inf:

- (1) Move by helicopter 9 Jan 66 to CUSTER (TRUNG L.P. airstrip).
- (2) Establish assembly area vic FUNSTON.
- (3) Prepare to initiate S&D operations in zone on order.

e. 2/28 Inf:

- (1) Conduct motor march to vic DI AN on 8 Jan 66 and occupy assembly area.
- (2) Conduct motor march to CUSTER (TRUNG L.P.) on 9 Jan 66 and secure TRUNG L.P. airfield for helicopter landings of 1/28 Inf and 1/16 Inf.

f. A Troop 1/4 Cav:

- (1) Conduct motor march to vic DI AN on 8 Jan 66 and occupy assembly area.
- (2) Be prepared to receive organic tank sections in assembly area at DI AN on 8 Jan 66.
- (3) Conduct motor march to TRUNG L.P. on 9 Jan 66 and secure CUSTER.
- (4) Be prepared to conduct screening operations on order.

g. 2/33 Arty:

- (1) IS
- (2) Conduct motor march with Bn (-) to vic DI AN on 8 Jan 66 and occupy assembly area.
- (3) Conduct motor march to TRUNG L.P. on 9 Jan 66 and establish firing positions at CUSTER.

h. C Co 1st Engr Bn:

- (1) Conduct motor march to CUSTER on 9 Jan 66.
- (2) Prepare to conduct Engineer operations on order.

i. Bde Trains:

- (1) Remain in present location.
- (2) Assist in security of Bde perimeter.

j. Coordinating Instructions:

- (1) River assault group (ARVN) may conduct operations on the SAIGON RIVER between XT6132 and XT7121.
- (2) Tank Sections, A Troop 1/4 Cav, will join A Troop in assembly area at DI AN.

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- (3) When VC contact is made all efforts will be made to fix and destroy the enemy force.
- (4) Initial FCL between 3d Bde and ARVN units is boundary between TACH's ALICE and BETTY.
- (5) Battalions will leave a minimum of one 81mm mortar per company and two 4.2" mortars per battalion for LNI KHE security.
- (6) Battalions conducting airmobile operations will submit number of personnel to be lifted NLT 051200 January 1966.
- (7) Battalions will submit list of vehicles and personnel to accompany motor column NLT 051200 January 1966.
- (8) Battalions less 1/28 Inf Bn will submit stay behind foxhole strength NLT 051200 January 1966.
- (9) CO 2/2 Inf will furnish one rifle company each to 1/16 Inf and 2/28 Inf areas for perimeter defense at LNI KHE.
- (10) Personnel will carry protective masks.

11. EXECUTION:

The Brigade was scheduled to initiate Operation BUCKSKIN on 8 January 1966 in the area around TRUNG LAP and to move from there to CU CHI to protect the 2d Brigade 25th Infantry Division as they moved into the area. Before Operation BUCKSKIN could be executed Operation CRIMP was ordered and commenced on 7 January 1966 and was not terminated until 12 January 1966. Operation BUCKSKIN was delayed as a result.

On 12 January 1966, 2/2 Infantry continued its mission of providing security for the 3d Brigade base camp area vic LNI KHE. The battalion continued this mission until 21 January 1966 at which time it replaced the 2/28 Inf at position CUSTER. 1/16 Infantry conducted platoon size S&D patrols commencing at 120645 January 1966. The patrols destroyed a base camp and tunnels capturing several documents vic XT642222. The patrols had 1 KIA by sniper fire vic XT685-216. 1/28 Infantry destroyed a base camp and captured 148 service records belonging to D308 VC Company vic XT640225. The battalion found an extensive tunnel network more than a mile and a half long. Many enemy weapons, documents and 75 tons of rice were discovered throughout the day in several tunnel systems. 2/28 Infantry conducted S&D in zone commencing at 120645 January 1966 and at 0710 hrs suffered 3 WIA from a mine vic XT621216. Company C destroyed 500 lbs of rice vic XT634204. At 0930 hrs Lt Col George S. Lyster, Jr, the battalion commander, was mortally wounded by sniper fire (XT626215) and was evacuated by Dustoff. He died 2 days later. Lt Col Kyle W. Bowie, the Brigade XO, assumed command of the 2/28 Infantry. Company B sustained 2 WIA from automatic weapons located in 2 concrete and steel bunkers (XT632185). An airstrike and riot control agent (CS) were used on the bunkers and the VC fled into a tunnel system. Company B sustained 4 WIA during the remainder of the day from mines at XT628-119 and XT620220. The Air Force FAC was slightly wounded when a bullet broke the windshield of his O1 aircraft cutting him on the neck with glass. A Troop 1/4 Cavalry supported the operation throughout the day and coiled for the night with 1/16 Infantry. This first day ended with no major VC contact and was a forecast for the entire operation.

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On 13 January 1966 the 1/16 Infantry conducted S&D operations throughout the day. Company B destroyed 1 ton of rice vic XT687215 as well as a VC ambush site consisting of tunnels, trenches and automatic weapons position at XT689216. The landtail of the battalion was escorted by Trp A 1/4 Cav (-) and joined the ground elements at 1620 hrs. 1/28 Infantry found a tunnel complex vic XT643226 at 0805 hrs which appeared from the materials found to be a mine and booby trap factory. The complex also contained 3 US carbines along with many maps and overlays of the area. The battalion suffered 2 KIA from sniper fire at XT642222 and XT644229. At 1650 hrs the battalion again came across a rice cache, capturing 200 one-hundred kilo bags and destroying one ton of loose rice vic XT644214. 2/28 Infantry started S&D operations at 0710 January 1966 and at 0808 hrs Company A found a VC training area vic XT625221. Within the hour Company A also discovered an extensive two level tunnel system (XT627221) finding ten tons of rice along with many weapons, clothing, documents and other material. Two men from Company B were wounded from sniper fire at XT628198. At 1603 hrs the battalion discovered 7 fresh graves vic XT648198. The battalion suffered 4 more MIA from mines during the remainder of the day. At 1730 hrs a plt of C Company 1st Engineer Bn engaged an estimated VC platoon and a relief force consisting of the LP platoon attached to the Brigade was able to place effective fire on the VC causing them to break contact. The Engineers suffered 1 KIA and 5 MIA to include the company commander as a result of this action with VC casualties unknown.

On 14 January 1966 two military policemen were wounded by a VC sniper at the north checkpoint of the Brigade perimeter at L-1 NHE. 1/16 Infantry conducted S&D during the day discovering tunnel works (XT674210), 1500 lbs of rice, and 21 houses vic XT699212. 1/28 Infantry continued to sweep in zone discovering trenchworks and tunnel systems. One-half ton of rice was destroyed (XT649201) and a number of medical supplies were discovered at XT645214 and evacuated. 2/28 Infantry engaged a VC platoon at XT634204 resulting in 2 US KIA and 4 US MIA. Troop A 1/4 Cav assisted in pushing the VC into the woods and the VC body count came to 16 when the engagement was finished.

On 15 January 1966 the 1/16 Infantry continued its S&D mission with 2 US MIA reported at XT682218. Small tunnel and trench systems were discovered and no further VC contact was made during the day. 1/28 Infantry suffered 9 MIA and 2 KIA during the day. One MIA from a mine vic XT645177, 2 from a sniper at XT647175 and XT625177, 1 MIA at XT634178, 5 MIA and 2 KIA at XT629170. One dead VC was found at XT633178. 2/28 Infantry uncovered 2000 rounds of small arms ammunition at XT634205 and a base camp at XT631195. The battalion suffered 7 MIA in the vicinity of XT634190. The battalion killed another VC at XT640218.

On 16 January the 1/16 Infantry conducted S&D in zone to the southern edge of TAOK MICE linking up with the 5th ARVN Division at 1135 hrs. The battalion suffered 1 MIA from sniper fire at XT646178. 1/28 Infantry linked up with the 5th ARVN Div at 1320 hrs. The 1/28 Infantry and 1/16 Infantry coiled for the night at XT666194. 2/28 Infantry was attacked by an estimated VC platoon supported by twenty 81mm mortar rounds at 0440 hrs resulting in 12 US MIA, 10 from the 2/28 Infantry and 2 from Trp A 1/4 Cav. At 1110 hrs a mine explosion at XT697188 caused 4 US MIA, 2 from 2/28 Inf and 2 from Trp A 1/4 Cav. At 1545

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hours the battalion became engaged in a fire fight with an estimated 2 companies of VC. The ensuing battle lasted for one and one half hours resulting in 10 VC KIA (body count) and 2 VOG. The battalion suffered 10 MIA, six of which returned to duty.

On 17 January 1966 at 0200 hours the 1/16 Infantry perimeter was attacked with grenades and mortars resulting in 4 US MIA. The battalion spent the day in care and cleaning with no further contact with the VC. 1/28 Inf had negative contact throughout the day. 2/28 Inf also had negative contact and spent the day in care and cleaning. Troop A 1/4 Cav cleared and secured the route into CUSTAR for the battalion landtails and in the process captured 1 wounded VC and also accounted for 1 VC KIA (body count) during the day. Troop A suffered one US MIA.

On 18 January 1966 1/16 Inf conducted S&D in zone suffering 2 MIA at XT663189 and XT635150, both from small arms fire. The battalion captured 1 VC during the day. 1/28 Inf conducted S&D, wounding 1 VC who avoided the pursuing force. 2/28 Inf conducted platoon size patrols and secured the road for a resupply convoy. The battalion had no contact with VC during the day.

On 19 January 1966, 1/16 Inf suffered 9 MIA (4 returned to duty) and 1 KIA when a VC mortar round hit and destroyed a 106 recoilless rifle, while assisting the 1/28 Inf as the latter assaulted VC positions. 1/28 Inf engaged a reinforced VC company at 1030 hrs and was assisted by 1/16 Inf and Trp A 1/4 Cav. The VC positions were hit by 6 sorties of tactical fighters and artillery fire. The positions were overrun but only 1 VC KIA was found as the enemy broke contact and fled. The battalion suffered 8 MIA during the day and Troop A 1/4 Cav had 1 MIA and 1 KIA. 2/28 Inf conducted patrols during the day and made light contact with the VC. One VC sniper was wounded and captured but died before he could be interrogated.

On 20 January 1966, 1/16 Inf moved to defensive positions at XT602195. 1/28 Inf moved to the vic of Position CUSTAR (TRUNG LAP RANGER CAMP). During the move the battalion suffered 2 MIA from mines at XT585198 and XT586199. 2/28 Inf also closed into CUSTAR and prepared to return to LAI KHE on 21 Jan 66.

On 21 January 1966, 2/2 Infantry replaced 2/28 Infantry at CUSTAR (TRUNG L.P.) and the 2/28 Inf assumed the mission of LAI KHE security. The exchange was effected by airlift and motor march, and the airlift was supported by the 11th Aviation Battalion. The 1/28 Inf captured 1 VC with weapon. He was from the CIO Company. The battalion secured the extraction and landing zone for the 2/2 Inf and 2/28 Inf. Troop A 1/4 Cav secured the road for the landtail of 2/2 and 2/28 Infantry. The exchange was completed without incident.

On 22 January 1966, 2/2 Inf, 1/16 Inf, 1/28 Inf occupied defensive positions at TRUNG L.P. as TET holidays continued. 2/28 Inf secured LAI KHE for the remainder of the operation.

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On 23 January 1966, 2/2 displaced to XT590228 with negative VC contact. 1/16 Inf continued to occupy positions vic TRUNG L&P. The battalions conducted local security and surveillance of the area during TET until 231730 Jan 66 when 1/28 was engaged by approximately 25 to 50 VC vic XT611239 and suffered 2 WIA. The VC fled after a 15 minute fire fight.

On 24 January 1966, 2/2 Infantry departed TRUNG L&P at 0920 hrs and closed into CU CHI area at 1620 hrs. 1/16 Inf departed TRUNG L&P at 0845 hrs and arrived at CU CHI at 1430 hrs suffering 1 WIA vic XT580190. 1/28 Inf displaced to CU CHI starting at 0805 hrs and arriving at 1200 hrs. The battalion engaged an estimated VC platoon at 1345 hrs and suffered 1 WIA, with VC casualties unknown. Troop A 1/4 Cav secured Hwy 1 from TRUNG L&P to CU CHI for this displacement.

On 25 January 1966, the 2/2 Inf suffered 3 WIA from incoming mortars, 2 WIA from snipers and 1 WIA from punji sticks and accounted for 1 VC KIA (BC) vic XT644167. 1/16 Inf continued to secure a portion of the Brigade perimeter vic CU CHI by conducting patrols to their front but had no contact with VC. The 49th ARVN Regiment performed some engineer work with 9 bulldozers in the village at XT6715 under the security provided by the 1/16 Infantry. 1/28 Inf had light contact with VC during the day with no casualties and with VC casualties unknown.

On 26 January 1966, the 2/2 Inf discovered a series of tunnels and trenches while securing the perimeter for elements of the 2d Brigade 25th Infantry Division which arrived with its first increment. The battalion suffered 4 WIA and 1 KIA during the day. 1/16 Inf accounted for 4 VC KIA (BC) during the day with no US casualties. The VC were killed by mortar fire and small arms fire. 1/28 Inf wounded and captured a VC vic XT626114. Troop A 1/4 Cav conducted a road march and was released to the operational control of the 1st Sqdn 4th Cav at 1400 hrs at which time the unit closed into PHU LOI.

On 27 January 1966, the 2/2 Infantry discovered a number of tunnels and trenchwork resulting in 2 VC KIA (BC) in one of the tunnels vic XT635157. All tunnel systems were destroyed and seeded with riot control agents. 1/16 Inf destroyed several houses and a haystack at XT655172 resulting in a secondary explosion. The battalion had very light contact during the day. The 1/28 Inf engaged the VC several times throughout the day resulting in 10 VC KIA (BC) and an estimated 20 VC WIA. US casualties were 3 KIA, 17 WIA. 2/28 Inf securing L&I KHE had a platoon size patrol engage an unknown number of VC at XT798373 resulting in 1 US KIA and 3 US WIA with VC losses unknown. The second increment of the 2d Brigade 25th Inf Div arrived in the CU CHI area with security provided by 3d Brigade.

On 28 January 1966, 2/2 Inf had sporadic contact with the VC resulting in 1 US KIA and 3 US WIA and no confirmed VC killed or wounded. Many tunnels and trench systems were destroyed. 1/16 Inf killed 1 VC (BC) during the night and captured his weapon and ammunition. 1/28 Inf accounted for 1 VC (BC) vic XT625159 and continued patrolling throughout the day.

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On 29 January 1966, the 1/27 and 2/27 Infantry of the 2d Brigade 25th Infantry Division came under the operational control of the 3d Brigade and the 1/28 Inf was extracted by air from CU CHI to PHOUK VIMH. The 1/28 Inf had 2 KIA during the early morning hours while on patrol. 2/2 Inf suffered 3 KIA and 5 WIA during the day and accounted for 2 VC KIA (BC) and 2 VC KIA (est). 1/16 Inf had no VC contact during the day but discovered several booby traps and fighting holes in their area of operations around XT656165 and XT660155. The 1/27 Inf suffered 3 US WIA during the day. The 2/27 Inf accounted for 2 VC KIA (BC) and 2 M1 rifles. Another element of the 2d Brigade 25th Infantry Division arrived closing into CU CHI without incident.

On 30 January 1966, at 0800 hrs, command and control of the CU CHI area was passed to the Commanding Officer, 2d Brigade 25th Infantry Division along with operational control of the 2/2 Inf and 1/16 Inf. The 2/2 Inf departed the CU CHI area by helicopter at 1330 hrs closing into LAI KHE at 1500 hrs. 1/16 Inf continued to secure part of the perimeter vic CU CHI suffering 2 WIA during the day. The 1/27 Inf received 2 US WIA during the day. 2/27 continued to defend part of the CU CHI perimeter receiving some mortar rounds into the area resulting in 2 KIA and 1 WIA. 2/28 Inf securing LAI KHE received mortar rounds during the night resulting in 1 US WIA.

On 31 January 1966 the 3d Brigade terminated Operation BUCKSKIN with the closing of all Brigade elements into LAI KHE at 1340 hrs thus ending a 20 day operation.

1.12. RESULTS:

a. Captured Equipment:

Quantity	Item
1	Officers Sword
2	M1 US rifles
60	Unidentified rifles
50	Grenades
1	French sub-machinegun
5505 tons	Rice
1	German Mauser
2000 rds	SA ammunition
4200	Documents
1	VC claymore
Numerous	Items of clothing
2	Cameras
148	VC service records

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On 31 January 1966 the 3d Brigade terminated Operation BUCKSKIN with the closing of all Brigade elements into LAI KHE at 1340 hrs thus ending a 20 day operation.

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b. Equipment Destroyed:

<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Item</u>
122 tons	Rice
1	Mortar night firing device
1	Chicom autumatic weapon
35	Houses
10	Entrenching tools
Numerous	Mines and booby traps
1000	5 gal water cans
183	Houses
38	Cycles

c. Friendly Losses:

<u>D.T.E</u>	<u>US</u>		<u>KL (BC)</u>	<u>(EST)</u>	<u>VC</u>		<u>VOC</u>
	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WLA</u>			<u>WLA (EST)</u>		
12 Jan 66	1	11 (1 WLA USARF)	0	0	0	0	
13 Jan 66	4	12	7	0	1	0	
14 Jan 66	5	9	16	20	0	0	
15 Jan 66	2	32	10	10	3	0	
16 Jan 66	1	34 (1 KL USARF)	12	10	0	2	
17 Jan 66	0	5	13	5	1	1	
18 Jan 66	0	4	0	0	1	3	
19 Jan 66	2	28	2	2	0		
20 Jan 66	0	3	0	0	0	1	
21 Jan 66	0	5	0	0	0	1	
22 Jan 66	0	4	0	0	0	0	
23 Jan 66	0	6	0	0	0	2	
24 Jan 66	0	2	0	0	0	0	
25 Jan 66	0	6	11	0	0	0	
26 Jan 66	1	4	4	2	0	2	
27 Jan 66	3	27	12	10	24	0	
28 Jan 66	1	4	2	0	3	0	
29 Jan 66	3	5	4	0	0	0	
30 Jan 66	2	6	0	0	0	0	
31 Jan 66	0	2	0	0	0	0	
TOTAL	25	209	93	59	33	12	

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: The Brigade S4 planned and coordinated ammunition and other classes of supply with the logistical base remaining at LMI KMZ due to the short flight time to the operational area. Ammunition for the attached battalion was requested and received with no problems.

Resupply to the battalion was on a day to day basis using HULD's. Clean clothes were prepared by the troops in advance and were flown to the operational area on request of the battalions. This proved to be a factor in maintaining the high morale and personal hygiene of the individual soldier.

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Company C 1st Engineer Battalion established water points at THUNG LP and later at CU CHI, thereby supplying the Brigade Task Force with ample water during the operation.

14. N/A.

15. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

Some of the lessons learned during Operation BUCKSKIN were:

- a. Each battalion should organize and train a tunnel team to exploit the discovery of tunnel systems.
- b. The airborne FAC should not orbit directly over a target area as this alerts the VC to the impending air strike.
- c. The use of bulldozers and front loaders in conjunction with riot agents and explosives was proven to be an effective means of sealing off tunnels and destroying trenchwork.
- d. Forward CP's should be moved frequently to avoid possible mortar attacks or booby traps being set in the area during darkness.
- e. Training on detecting firing positions and reacting to sniper fire must be increased.
- f. Trip-flares should be located so as not to give away friendly positions and thereby confuse the enemy and deny him information.
- g. Scout dogs and handlers would be of great value in operations involving trenchwork and tunnel systems.

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS:

The 2d Brigade 25th Infantry Division moved into its base camp area and took its initial positions at CU CHI without being fired upon by the enemy. The search and destroy operations conducted by the 3d Brigade were successful in that areas never before visited by United States or Vietnamese forces, were entered and the Viet Cong sustained casualties or driven away. Accomplishing these directed missions caused casualties in our own Brigade. However, this operation was a great success and letters of commendation have been received by the Brigade from General Westmoreland, COMUSMACV, and General Seaman, Commanding General 1st Infantry Division.

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It is gratifying to report that replacements, many of whom experienced combat for the first time in this operation, have been received and trained by their units and integrated into the fighting team without major complications. This is evidence that commanders at all levels in this task force are keenly aware of the importance of receiving the new replacement with the necessary orientation and training to build confidence in himself and in his unit.

This great team conducted Operation BUCKSKIN in an outstanding manner and in the unbeatable spirit of the Fighting BIG RED ONE - No mission too difficult . . . No sacrifice too great . . . Duty First.

William E. Brodebeck
WILLIAM E. BRODEBECK
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

Copies furnished

MACV J2

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Commander 2d Air Div

Commanding General 1st Inf Div

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